

considering today, if we are wise enough not to amend it, is identical to language that passed in the Senate on July 25 in an overwhelming unanimous bipartisan vote, 98 to 0. If we pass language today without amendment, the bill will go straight to the President's desk, and after 50 years of inadequacy on the subject of lobbying disclosure, we will finally have a law that measures up to the task.

The bill covers paid professional lobbyists, those who spend 20 percent or more of their time lobbying and are paid more than \$5,000 during a 6-month period. It requires the semiannual report. Documents are to be filed with the Clerk of House and the Secretary of the Senate and shall be available for full public inspection. Grassroots lobbying activities are protected as they are under the Constitution, and we do not infringe upon those activities in any way.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me once again emphasize, this is the type of bipartisan action the American people have requested. Today's legislation reflects great credit on the gentleman from Florida [Mr. CANADY], the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. FRANK], and the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS].

I urge an affirmative vote on the rule and the defeat of all amendments.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. McHALE. I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman. He introduced this bill identical to what the Senate did and then incorporated his bill and the committee bill. I just want to thank the gentleman for his leadership on this issue and to say that it has been a pleasure to work with him as well. I am sorry I left him out of my salutes because he deserves to be on the very top.

Mr. McHALE. Mr. Speaker, I would note that the quality of the bill was much improved when the name of the gentleman from Florida [Mr. CANADY] was moved to the front.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California [Ms. WOOLSEY].

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mr. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the American people are sick and tired of wealthy special interests peddling influence through the halls of Congress. We need to change the way Washington works, and we need to do it now.

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For too long, Congress has been held hostage by lobbyists trying to force their special interest agendas on the American public. And too often, they are successful.

H.R. 2564 is the first truly comprehensive lobbying reform bill in almost 50 years. This bill will let the American people know who the lobbyists are and how much they are spending to influence Members of Congress.

The Senate passed this important bill unanimously. We don't need to change it. We need to pass it and send it to the President right away. Let us not delay this much needed reform any longer.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to restore faith in American Government. Vote for honest government. Vote for this bill and vote for it without amendment.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I, contrary to published reports in the local newspaper this morning, will support this rule. I would add parenthetically that I have received an apology from the newspaper for making a mistake, and that started my day in a very pleasant way, but people have been asking me why I would not support this rule. I am supporting this rule. I urge others to do the same.

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 resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

POSTPONING VOTES AND LIMITING DEBATE TIME ON AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 2564, LOBBYING DISCLOSURE ACT OF 1995

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that during further consideration of H.R. 2564 pursuant to House Resolution 269 the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may postpone until a time during further consideration in the Committee of the Whole a request for a recorded vote on any amendment, and that the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may reduce to not less than 5 minutes the time for voting by electronic device on any postponed question that immediately follows another vote by electronic device without intervening business, provided that the time for voting by electronic device on the first in any series of questions shall be not less than 15 minutes; and further, that debate on each amendment to the bill and any amendments thereto be limited to 30 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent of the amendment to the bill and an opponent.

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

Mr. SKAGGS. Reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, and I do not expect that I will object, but I just want to inquire of the gentleman if it is further his understanding that agreement has been reached informally with the proponents of certain of the amendments that have been noticed on this bill that they will not come up tonight, namely the amendment protected by the rule offered by the gentleman from

Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH], the amendment protected in the rule to be offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma [Mr. ISTOOK], and two other amendments offered by the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH] dealing with the same general subject?

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SKAGGS. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the gentleman from Oklahoma [Mr. ISTOOK] and the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH] have both agreed that those amendments would not be brought before the House this evening.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SKAGGS. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Let me give the gentleman further assurance. It is my guess that there being a significant majority of Members left that have any brains, that within about 20 minutes after this unanimous-consent request there will not be any Members left in this place. Therefore any amendment that is offered would be at the suffrage of people who did not want to suggest the quorum problem, so I would assure my friend, if there was any problem, that all of a sudden we would be deterred by the lack of a quorum.

Mr. SKAGGS. I appreciate the gentleman's further assurances.

Further on my reservation, the ½ hour equally divided debate time that was included in the UC request would apply to each and all amendments to the bill either considered tonight or at such subsequent date as we might resume debate on this legislation; is that correct?

Mr. CANADY of Florida. That is correct.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Will the gentleman yield to me further under his reservation of objection?

Mr. SKAGGS. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Let me say to the gentleman who has been very responsible for this, and I appreciate our ability to work together, while we would have the power under this unanimous-consent request to roll votes when we resumed, I would assume that a spirit of comity would govern whether or not we use that; that is, if there was not agreement on both sides, we would not roll the votes when we come back at it on the next time.

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. CANADY of Florida. It would certainly be my desire that that power be exercised in consultation with the minority and other interested parties so that the interests of all Members of the House could be fully protected.

Mr. SKAGGS. Further reserving the right to object, and in the same vein, I think, and as I understand it, there are some logical groupings of amendments,

and it might make sense to apply some sense of germaneness and mutual relevancy as we look at which might be rolled, and I assume the gentleman would agree to take those kinds of factors into consideration as well.

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Yes; of course the Chair will be making the decisions as to when the rolling of amendments will take place and who will be recognized to offer an amendment, but it would certainly be my desire to work with all Members to take into account those considerations.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, let me say the subcommittee chairman has been perfectly fair, and I think there is no problem.

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Tim Sanders, one of his secretaries.

LOBBYING DISCLOSURE ACT OF 1995

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 269 and rule XXIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2564.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2564) to provide for the disclosure of lobbying activities to influence the Federal Government, and for other purposes, with Mr. KOLBE in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. CANADY] will be recognized for 1 hour, and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. FRANK] will be recognized for 1 hour.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida [Mr. CANADY].

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, today this House is presented with an historic opportunity to end 40 years of inaction on the issue of lobbying disclosure reform. H.R. 2564, the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, provides for the effective disclosure of those who lobby the executive and legislative branches of Government, what legislation they are attempting to influence, and how much they are being compensated to do so.

An identical measure passed the Senate on July 25 by a vote of 98 to zero. However, the Senate vote should not be taken as a sign that lobbying disclosure reform legislation is a sure bet for even the 104th Congress, which has been far more reform-minded than those which came before. Indeed, for more than 40 years, there is only one word to describe the attempts at meaningful reform of the laws governing disclosure of lobbying activities—that word is “gridlock.” Over the years, Congress has tried again and again, but failed again and again, to pass meaningful lobbying disclosure legislation.

The Supreme Court's narrow construction of the 1946 Regulation of Lobbying Act in *U.S. versus Harris* unquestionably made the legislation virtually meaningless. But the Court in that same opinion also demonstrated that it was sympathetic to the need for lobbying disclosure. In fact, the Court made it plain that Congress needed to be aware of the activities of interest and pressure groups.

As Chief Justice Earl Warren stated, “The full realization of the American ideal of government by elected representatives depends to no small extent on their ability to properly evaluate * * * lobbying activities. ‘Otherwise the voice of the people may all too easily be drowned out by the voice of special interest groups seeking favored treatment while masquerading as proponents of the public weal.’”

Ironically, in 1950 the staff director of the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, George Galloway, said in reference to the 1946 act that “after the lobbying law had been in operation for a few years, experience would reveal any defects in it which could be corrected by amending and strengthening the Act.” Unfortunately, Mr. Galloway could not have been more wrong. Yes, the act has revealed its extensive defects. However, every attempt to strengthen the act has turned into an exercise in futility.

The history of lobbying disclosure reform is a history of inaction and stalemate. From 1956 to 1959, major revisions to the Lobbying Act were proposed. No action was taken on those proposals.

In 1965, the Senate's Committee on Rules and Administration issued a report recommending that administration of the Lobbying Act be assigned to the Comptroller General. No action was taken on this recommendation.

In 1967, measures strengthening the Lobbying Act passed the Senate. President Johnson urged the House to take similar action, but the House failed to do so.

In 1970, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, newly established in the wake of the Bobby Baker investigations, reported a complex lobbying disclosure bill titled the Legislative Activities Disclosure Act. This major effort at lobbying reform ultimately came to naught.

In 1976, a bill was approved in the Senate, but the House did not act until

the final day of the 94th Congress. There was no time to reconcile the different bills passed by each chamber of Congress. Once again nothing was accomplished.

In 1977, the House Judiciary Committee and the full House passed lobbying disclosure legislation, but the Senate bill was held up in committee.

In 1979, the House Judiciary Committee once again reported a measure, but the House leadership held up floor consideration until the Senate showed it could get a bill through committee. The bill never made it through the Senate Committee.

In 1992, after years of study by the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, the first version of the Lobbying Disclosure Act was introduced. However, the Senate did not consider the bill in the 102d Congress.

Just last year in the 103d Congress, this House passed a lobbying disclosure reform bill by an overwhelming majority. The Senate passed an identical bill last year, but cloture could not be obtained on the Conference Committee report in the Senate. Thus the effort failed.

In some years as this history shows, one chamber passed lobbying reform and the other chamber then failed to act. In other years, the legislation died in conference between the House and the Senate. At other times, there was simply no movement forward.

The bottom line was always the same: Gridlock. But today this House can end the gridlock. Today this House can pass the Lobbying Disclosure Act without amendment. Today this House can send the Senate-passed bill directly to the President's desk for his signature. This is an historic opportunity we cannot let slip away from us.

The Committee on the Judiciary reported this legislation last week with no amendments and no dissenting votes. Today this House will consider a number of amendments to this bill. Some of the amendments have considerable merit; others have less merit; and a few are quite simply bad ideas.

But all of the amendments have one thing in common: they threaten to derail this important reform bill. If this issue goes back to the Senate, and if history is any guide, we may very well hear nothing more about lobbying reform during this Congress. We should not forsake the good in order to achieve the “perfect” lobbying disclosure reform bill. The risk of derailing this bill is simply too great.

Mr. Chairman, let me briefly describe what this bill does. H.R. 2564 is designed to strengthen public confidence in Government by replacing the existing patchwork of lobbying disclosure laws with a single, uniform statute which covers the activities of paid, professional lobbyists. The Act streamlines disclosure requirements to ensure that meaningful information is provided and requires all paid, professional lobbyists to register and file regular, semiannual reports identifying