

PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE—
KEEPING THE HOUSE IN SESSION
TO CONSIDER BILL REGARDING
DEBT CEILING TO AVOID DE-
FAULT OF FULL FAITH AND
CREDIT OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 2(a)(1) of rule IX, I hereby give notice of my intention to offer a resolution which raises a question of the privileges of the House.

Mr. Speaker, the form of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. —

Whereas the inability of the House to pass a bill to raise the public debt limit will cause the Federal Government to default on its obligations and affect the dignity and integrity of House proceedings; and

Whereas the inability of the House to pass a bill to raise the public debt limit will cause severe hardship on Federal employees, Federal contractors, and the American people and cause millions of American citizens to hold the House in disrepute: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution, the Speaker of the House shall take such action to keep the House in session until the House considers a clean bill regarding the debt ceiling to avoid default of the full faith and credit of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice with some 40 cosponsors from around the Nation for this privileged resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS). Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time or place designated by the Chair in the legislative schedule within 2 legislative days if being properly noticed. That designation will be announced at a later time. In the meantime, the form of the resolution proffered by the gentlewoman from Texas will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair is not at this point making a determination as to whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I was trying to hear the ruling of the Chair, if the Chair would be so kind, because the last two or three sentences of his ruling I did not understand because the House was not in order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. I will repeat the last part of that for the gentleman.

The Chair is not at this point making a determination as to whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

Mr. FIELDS of Texas. And what time is that, may I ask, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will announce that when the Speaker makes his determination.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2546,
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPRO-
PRIATIONS ACT, 1996

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 351 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 351

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2546) making appropriations for the government of the District of Columbia and other activities chargeable in whole or in part against the revenues of said District for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia [Mr. LINDER] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINDER. 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 yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 351 provides for consideration of the conference report for H.R. 2546, the District of Columbia appropriations bill for fiscal year 1996, and waives all points of order against this bill. This rule provides for the orderly consideration of this conference agreement and will facilitate its consideration. Normal procedures of the House allow for 1 hour of general debate divided equally between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations.

Finally, House rules provide for a motion to recommit with or without instructions as is the right of the minority.

Mr. Speaker, the appropriations process is clearly more difficult when you attempt to pass fiscally responsible legislation. The District of Columbia appropriations conference report will not satisfy everyone and does not cut as much spending as many of us would have liked, but I am hopeful that the President will sign this commonsense bill which will move us closer to restoring the District's fiscal health.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will stem the fiscal crisis that the District has created. The gentlelady from the District of Columbia has stated that we all have a duty to help raise our Nation's capital out of its fiscal crisis, and I believe that this bill fulfills that obligation. The District must now restore fiscal sanity and create a more efficient and productive Capital City for its residents and all Americans.

The conference report provides a total appropriation of \$4.99 billion for fiscal year 1996. In addition, the conferees have included a number of legislative provisions that will ensure that a few specified activities are achieved by the local government.

I am particularly pleased that the bill includes reforms that are imperative to the revival of the D.C. school system. The conference agreed to include low-income scholarships of up to \$3,000 that qualified students could use to attend private schools in the District. The conference also designates \$15 million dollars in order to repair deteriorating schools and produce an acceptable environment for our children's education. Representative GUNDERSON deserves high praise for his persistent efforts to reform the District's school system.

Mr. Speaker, given the size and population of the District, it is difficult to argue that a bill that provides this city with about \$5 billion dollars is not generous. For those who still believe this bill is unfair, consider this: the Federal per capita spending equals about \$9,000. I would argue that no other city in America receives so much Federal funding and has so many mismanaged and inefficient services to show for it.

Nonetheless, the District shamelessly comes to us with yet another exorbitant wish list for funding. The House has been very charitable in preserving home rule, but we have a constitutional duty to keep the District's budget in balance. To fulfill this obligation, Congress will appropriate funds for the District and set the fiscal and policy parameters. The Financial Authority will then provide guidance for a sound financial operation. We are giving the District a golden opportunity with this bill to prove that it can control spending in a disciplined and competent manner. It is a fiscally responsible solution that is more than generous and the District cannot expect any better.

I certainly hope that the District will be held accountable for the expenditure of this funding by the District Financial Management Assistance Authority which has been tasked to quickly implement commonsense money management. We are all aware of the apprehension that remains about the District's ability to govern itself competently, and I hope that we can agree that this bill is a proper vehicle to drive the District into an era of financial stability.

This is a city that has been wasting other people's money for an awfully long time and has wanted unconditional freedom in doing it. The city has reached a point where it cannot pay its bills, protect its streets, or even plow its streets, for that matter. While the bill may not go as far as many would like, the House needs to pass an appropriations bill to keep the District going.

The conferees, under the leadership of Chairman JIM WALSH, have worked well to balance an assortment of concerns, including home rule, and made

difficult choices with the limited funding available this year. As is the case with the other appropriations bills, the product of their work reflects the Nation's new budget realities. While we currently do not have a Balanced Budget Act with tax relief and entitlement reform, we will continue to move toward our goal as a Nation to spend within our means.

This fiscal emergency requires drastic action, and the conference report is designed to insure, once and for all, that the available funding is spent efficiently and where it is needed most.

Mr. Speaker, this rule was favorably reported by the Rules Committee. I urge my colleagues to support the rule so that we may complete our work on the District's 1996 funding and start the process of restoring the District's financial health.

□ 1820

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

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

(Mr. FROST asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this rule and to this conference report. I oppose this rule because the text of this conference report has only a few minutes ago been made available to the Members of this body. I do not think it would be too much to ask to allow interested Members the opportunity to fully study the conference report, especially if it still contains far-reaching language relating to the creation of a multimillion-dollar school-voucher program in the District of Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, we are scheduled to be here tomorrow, so why not take up this bill at that time? Is our schedule so full tomorrow that we cannot fit an hour's debate on this conference report into the floor schedule for Thursday? It seems that if we are going to consider this conference report at all before the month of March, we must do it today since the Republican leadership is so bent on taking a 3-week vacation starting tomorrow afternoon. Mr. Speaker, this procedure is not fair to the residents of the District of Columbia and it is not a responsible way to legislate.

But, in addition to my opposition to considering this conference report before the Members have had an opportunity to study its contents, I am opposed to the conference report itself. If the information that is available to me is correct, this report still contains language which creates a school voucher program. I have been and I remain opposed to the use of Federal funds for school vouchers. While the conferees have attempted to cloak the creation of a voucher program in the District of Columbia in a veil of respectability, the fact is that these provisions would ultimately allow the use of Federal funds to pay tuition at private schools.

Mr. Speaker, that is a provision I cannot support and for that reason I will oppose this conference report.

Mr. Speaker, this appropriation is not a place to practice the social engineering of the Republican right. Instead, what this appropriation is for is to provide the District with critically needed funds that will allow the city to serve its citizens. It is time that the Republican majority stop trying to impose its social agenda on this city and to act in the best interests of its residents. I urge my colleagues to oppose this rule and to oppose this conference report.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, on January 25, 1996, during the debate on House Resolution 342, Representative HOYER asked me, in reference to "martial-law" rules, whether or not this kind of rule has ever been proposed prior to June 30 of any legislative year in the history of the Congress. My response was, no, it has never been proposed before June 30. Martial-law rules are multipurpose rules clearing the way for the House to act quickly on a broad range of legislative measures by stating that certain of the standing rules will not apply for a specified period of time, usually the few remaining days at the end of a session. If this were the end of the session, House Resolution 342 would be a typical example of a martial-law rule.

At one point late in the debate, Representative MCINNIS, who managed the rule for the majority, recited a list of rules that waived clause 4(b) of rule XI—requiring a two-thirds vote to consider a rule on the same day it is reported from the Committee on Rules—and that were reported prior to June 30 by the Rules Committee during the 103d Congress. He made the statement that these rules were all reported before June 30 of each session of the Congress and were no different from House Resolution 342. He is correct in his statement only with regard to the fact that these rules were reported before June 30 in each session and that each contained a two-thirds waiver but that is where the similarities end. There are indeed major differences between the resolutions he cited and House Resolution 342.

I believe my friend, the gentleman from Colorado, can clearly see the differences between the rules on his list and House Resolution 342. Those on his list are single purpose rules waiving the two-thirds requirement for same-day consideration for one specifically identified measure and the waiver usually lasted 1 day and never more than 2 days. Representative HOYER was referring to martial-law rules when he spoke of House Resolution 342 as "a rule which allows for 1 day of consideration of matters." The word "matters" is plural. The 103d Congress never waived the two-thirds rule against a rule that covered multiple bills before June 30 in either year. House consideration of this rule is indeed setting history or a new precedent because it has never been done before. Having reviewed the Rules Committee surveys of activities from the 98th Congress through the 103d, I can say with assurance, the House has not once considered a martial-law rule this early in the session. I also made clear in my response to the gentleman from Colorado that we were referring to multiple bill waivers—martial-law rules—and not single purpose rules like those he recited.

The following summary and accompanying chart will clarify and shed further light on the distinct and important differences between those single-purpose rules and House Resolution 342.

First, House Resolution 342 provides for consideration of an unlimited number of separate and distinct bills or resolutions within three subject categories. The rules, recited by Mr. MCINNIS, were all single issue resolutions providing in each instance for only one specific bill or resolution. The authority granted by each of the rules could be used only one time and not over and over as is the case with House Resolution 342.

Second, the duration of the authority provided in each of these rules was for only 1 day in six of the rules and not longer than 2 days in the other two rules. House Resolution 342 provides authority for the extremely long and unnecessary period of 51 days, from January 25 through March 15.

Third, of those rules that were reported before June 30 during each of the two sessions of the 103d Congress, only four: House Resolution 61, House Resolution 142, House Resolution 395, and House Resolution 441 were considered by the House. The other four rules were either tabled—House Resolution 111, House Resolution 150, House Resolution 153—or not used by the effective date contained in the rule—House Resolution 356. All four rules considered by the House were effective for 1 day only. In one of the rules, House Resolution 395, the waiver of the two-thirds rule was combined with a general debate provision for the bill so the House could continue its consideration of the bill the following day.

Finally, in all four instances where the House considered and voted on the two-thirds waiver, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle opposed the waiver and voted against the rule. Now that they are responsible for conducting the business of the House they embrace the idea and are willing to take it to new and historic levels. The House has passed five martial-law rules since November 15, 1995, and will be operating under the authority of these five rules with regard to budgetary legislation for a period of 4 months, from November 15, 1995 until March 16, 1996. The combined result of this prolonged authority makes the long standing House rule against same-day consideration of rules of little effect. The purpose of the two-thirds rule is to allow for adequate notice to Members before a bill comes to the floor. A review of all the budgetary bills considered by the House during this period reveals a disturbing trend. Almost all have been considered under the martial-law authority. I only hope that this rule will be the last instance of martial-law and that this type of rule does not become the management tool of choice for the majority during the remainder of the second session.

RESOLUTIONS WAIVING CLAUSE 4(B) OF RULE XI
REPORTED BEFORE JUNE 30

H.R. 61.—Family and Medical Leave Act.—reported from Rules 2/3/93; adopted 2/4/93 (239-155); no limit on duration. (However, H.Res. 71, the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 1, Family and Medical Leave Act, was considered and adopted on 2/4/93 making the effective duration only one day.)

H.R. 111.—Emergency Unemployment Compensation—reported from Rules 3/3/93; tabled 3/9/93; effective one day (3/4/93). NOT USED

H.Res. 142—H.Con.Res. 64—Concurrent Resolution on the Budget—reported from Rules

3/30/93; adopted 3/31/93 (248-171); effective one day (3/31/93).

H.Res. 150.—H.R. 1335—Emergency Supplemental Appropriations—reported from Rules 4/1/93; tabled 10/27/93; effective two days (4/2/93-4/3/93). NOT USED

H.Res. 153.—H.R. 1335—Emergency Supplemental Appropriations—reported from Rules 4/21/93; tabled 10/27/93; effective one day (4/22/93). NOT USED

H.Res. 356.—H.R. 3759—Emergency Supplemental Appropriations—reported from Rules 2/9/94; pending; effective two days (2/10/94-2/11/94). NOT USED

H.Res. 395.—H.R. 4092—Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act—reported from Rules 3/22/94; adopted 3/23/94 (240-174); effective one day (3/23/94). This rule provided for general debate and next day consideration of a subsequent rule for H.R. 4092.

H.Res. 441.—H.R. 4426—Foreign Operations Appropriations—reported from Rules 5/24/94; adopted 5/25/94 (246-174); effective one day (5/25/94).

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

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, 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.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 351, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 2546) making appropriations for the government of the District of Columbia and other activities chargeable in whole or in part against the revenues of said District for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). Pursuant to House Resolution 351, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see prior proceedings of the House of today.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York [Mr. WALSH] and the gentleman from California [Mr. DIXON] each will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York [Mr. WALSH].

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report on the bill, H.R. 2546, and the amendment in disagreement, and that I be permitted to include a tabulation summarizing the conference agreement.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, this evening we have before the House the conference agreement on H.R. 2546, the District of Columbia Appropriations Act for Fiscal

Year 1996. The bill passed the other body on September 22, and passed this House on November 2. We had five meetings with our Senate counterparts, including one at 10 o'clock this morning, as well as numerous other meetings in our efforts to work out the differences between the House and Senate versions of this bill.

In the meantime, we provided funding to the District government through continuing resolutions under which a portion of the Federal payment was paid to the city. Under these CR's, \$441 million of the \$660 million annual Federal payment has been disbursed. These funds were placed in the Control Board's hands with half of the money going back to the U.S. Treasury to repay last year's loan to the District.

On January 3, I introduced a CR that allows the District to continue operating through September 30 using its own local funds. That CR passed the Congress and was signed by the President on January 4. Even though this bill has been pending in conference, the District and Control Board have had the authority as well as a substantial part of the Federal payment to continue operations.

Mr. Speaker, this conference agreement provides the District government with a budget of \$4.994 billion—that is an enormous sum of money for a population of 554,000—over \$9,000 for every resident. For that kind of money the District residents should be receiving the highest quality city services in America.

The latest revenue estimates for fiscal 1996 made by the District's new chief financial officer are now \$4.848 billion, which is \$150 million below our conference agreement on expenditures of \$4.994 billion. Our amount is only a cap on spending, so we are expecting that the Control Board will make the necessary reductions in expenditures to match that revenue estimate. Had we accepted the city's budget of \$5.148 billion, we would now be looking at a \$300 million deficit.

The Financial Control Board has been in place for about 7 months and I am confident they are headed in the proper direction to bring the District government back from the brink of financial insolvency brought about by 20 years of home rule and 15 years of unrestrained spending. I fully support what they are doing and look forward to the 4-year financial plan and recommendations they will be sending to the Congress.

Mr. Speaker, there were numerous items that we resolved early in the conference—but some of the issues were extremely difficult.

First, on the abortion issue, the conference agreement provides that no Federal or local funds shall be used to perform abortions except to save the life of the mother or in cases of rape or incest. This language has been signed into law by the President in the continuing resolutions that have passed this Congress over the past few

months. The Senate bill reflected current law which restricted the use of Federal funds only.

On domestic partners, the Senate language prohibited the use of only Federal funds to implement or enforce the District's Domestic Partners Act. The conference agreement continues current law which prohibits the use of both Federal and local funds.

In the past few months there has been a great deal of discussion about local efforts to reform city operations. The school board is considering reducing their generous salaries and even introducing some privatization to their operations and management. The local governments are considering making Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant a regional authority. City departments involved with economic development and planning are looking to consolidate and eliminate duplication. These initiatives were set in motion by this year's appropriations bill and our strong encouragement.

In order to bring about additional change in the District, our committee identified 28 items of concern which were referred to the Control Board. We have asked the Control Board to resolve those items and report back by April 1, 1996. I believe that both the financial and management problems of this city must be addressed in tandem. Improving city management is a No. 1 priority. For example, we have requested management assessment studies to improve the delivery of services especially in the areas of trash collection, school and office maintenance, and police, fire and ambulance maintenance, and deployment.

What is needed is action and results now.

The District government spends over \$5 billion a year for city services. The city's per capita cost for education, safety, trash collection, aid-to-families with dependent children, job training, homelessness, and substance abuse appear to be the highest in the Nation. We have asked the Control Board to seek out the best management and operating practices of other cities and introduce them into the District government to improve operations.

So Mr. Speaker, the most contentious issues discussed at our conference meetings involved reforming the District of Columbia's failing public school system. This conference agreement culminates a year of debate, discussion, and negotiation from the local school level to the Congress regarding the amount, shape, and pace of education reform necessary in the District of Columbia.

One of the items I am most proud of is the low-income scholarship program. This program will provide many of the District's most needy children with the opportunity to receive a first-rate education. I believe we need to begin educating tomorrow's city leaders today. The scholarship program provides up to \$3,000 that can be used by students to attend private schools in the District

as well as public or private schools in the surrounding jurisdictions. It will give these kids and their parents a choice they have never had. This will also, in my opinion, be the catalyst that is needed to transform the District's public schools into better educational institutions. To meet the early objections posed by the other body to the school reform proposals, we have provided the city council with final approval of the program, but I am confident the city council will support this program. In fact, the council's committee on education unanimously supported parent choice. I quote from a

letter the council's committee sent to our colleague from Wisconsin:

The Committee embraces the creation of a federally funded scholarship program that would assist low-income parents in enrolling their children in * * * the school of their choice in the District of Columbia.

So Mr. Speaker, I would urge all Members including our colleagues on the other side of the aisle to pass this conference report and help the residents of this District.

I would like to thank the members of the subcommittee for their hard work on this bill.

I want to especially thank the full committee chairman, the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON] for his extraordinary efforts on this bill. He took time to participate in our markups and meetings while still tending to other important appropriations matters.

Each of these members is to be commended. I also want to thank the House and Senate staff as well as my personal staff for their hard work and their assistance.

Mr. Speaker, at this point in the RECORD, I will insert a tabulation summarizing the conference action.

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But I am confident the city council will support it. In fact, the council's committee on education unanimously supported parental choice in schools, and I quote from a letter from the council's committee to our colleague from Wisconsin, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. GUNDERSON]: "The committee embraces the creation of a federally funded scholarship program that would assist low-income parents in enrolling their children in the school of their choice in the District of Columbia."

So, Mr. Speaker, I would urge all Members, including our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, to pass this conference report, to help the residents of this District.

I would like to thank the members of the subcommittee for their hard work on this bill, and I would remind my colleagues that this is going to be very difficult, a very difficult bill to pass. There is enough in this bill to make everybody angry. It is a compromise bill, but overall, it is the best bill we could bring to the floor. It is a good bill, in my estimation, and it begins the reforms that are needed in this most important of all American cities.

There is a special relationship here between the Congress and the city, and we need to enhance that relationship. We are spending a little bit more money this year than we did last year, about \$15 million, but it is for one purpose, to reform these schools. Most of the money will go to the private school system, but it will also provide for educational choice and for charter schools.

Mr. Speaker, lastly, let me commend my colleagues on the subcommittee and my distinguished ranking member, the former chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from California [Mr. DIXON], for working through this very, very difficult bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I too would like to commend the chairman of the subcommittee for doing what I consider a good job under extraordinary circumstances, and thank the staff of the subcommittee for their fine efforts.

Mr. Speaker, let me give the body a little bit of history here as to what is really happening with the D.C. bill. First of all, it is no secret that it is the smallest of the 13 appropriation bills, and when the District got home rule there was a Federal payment that was worked out in lieu of the District paying property taxes. This year that amounts to \$660 million.

At the same time that we provide this Federal payment, there has been a philosophical move nationally to provide vouchers or, as some people would describe it, to make it a purr word instead of the snarl word scholarships, and the majority of this House have decided they would try this out on the District of Columbia.

On the other side of the Capitol in the Senate, the Senate would not go along with this issue, and since both Houses have passed the bill, and for some 65 or 70 days it has been the issue of vouchers that has held this up. Because we did not have a bill for the District, there was a continuing resolution, and one way to put pressure on this issue was to dribble out the Federal payment so that at some point in time the District would have to say "uncle."

As a matter of fact, the last continuing resolution that passed here, the chairman of the committee saw fit not to include any of the \$250 million that is still owed the District in the Federal payment, because you see, that puts more pressure on to get this bill out so they can get the money and, therefore, in fact the voucher system stands a better chance.

Now, as it relates to my participation in any of the negotiations, I do not think anyone on the committee would disagree that I have had none, zero. And when the chairman of the committee says that, in fact, they have reached an agreement, what he means is that the House majority, the Republicans, and the Senate majority under Mr. JEFFORDS, that they have reached an agreement, and as a matter of fact, when we met at 10 o'clock this morning, the agreement that was presented to us was not in its final version until such time as we took a vote. The chairman on the Senate side was kind enough to wait until the document arrived in the room before we took a vote on it.

When I began to raise questions about some of the things that I had been informed that had been agreed to last night, the chairman of the committee, Mr. JEFFORDS, informed me that that part, part of that, had been changed this morning. Now, I point that out to say that I think the chairman of the subcommittee spoke incorrectly as he related to describing the vouchers.

It is my understanding, Mr. Speaker, of the vouchers, that the \$5 million that is dedicated to the vouchers, that that voucher proposal, and I am really asking at this point because I am not sure, that that voucher proposal, one, would allow for vouchers to be used only in the District of Columbia, but what I would describe as the tutorial program, the bill is silent as to where those people would go for tutorial services and, therefore, it is my understanding at this point that the voucher itself cannot be used outside of the District, contrary to what you made in your State.

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

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

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

It is my understanding that the priority, the priority for spending of the vouchers is within the District, and I

might add that the priority for spending is in the District. There may be, it may be used outside of the District, but the priority is within the District, but the scholarship board will work with the District council to determine how much of that is used for tutorial and remedial programs and how much of it is used for vouchers.

Mr. DIXON. Reclaiming my time, I thoroughly understand that the scholarship corporation would, in fact, disburse the money in a manner it saw fit. But I think that Members that are watching can see that the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. GUNDERSON] is not clear on it. I do not think the staff is clear on it.

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

Mr. DIXON. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. GUNDERSON. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

What I was trying to do was find the exact bill language that I might read to you.

Under the conference agreement, the scholarship board shall propose the allocation of scholarships.

Mr. DIXON. I understand that.

Mr. GUNDERSON. That shall be approved by the council, so the scholarship board has no authority to disburse this money as they see fit.

Mr. DIXON. I say to the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. GUNDERSON], it is my time. I understand all of that. I am asking the question: Can a voucher be used outside of the District of Columbia?

Mr. GUNDERSON. It can be, but there is a priority within the District. The reason we did not totally exclude it is because there are going to be some kind of special needs students that are already served outside of the District.

Mr. DIXON. Let me reclaim my time and say to the gentleman that I certainly admire the hard work and energy that he has put into this. Obviously the gentlewoman from the District is on the floor. That was not her understanding of it at the beginning. But since we are on the voucher system, let me say that probably since it allows for the voucher outside of the District, that most of the vouchers would be applied outside of the District.

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

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

Mr. WALSH. Just briefly, there are, as I think my colleague is aware, there are a number of children in the District with special needs, and the District, it is necessary for the District to have these kids taken outside of the District so that those special needs can be met. They cannot meet them within the public school system of the District. So we have to keep these available for those children.

Mr. DIXON. Is the gentleman saying, and I hope since we are having this dialogue that you will be kind enough to

yield me some time, are you saying then, is it only the kids that have special needs, that is, a categorical group that will take the voucher outside the District?

Mr. WALSH. If the gentleman will yield further, as I understand it, no.

Mr. DIXON. So my point is that with the voucher system, I dare say that most of the vouchers would be exercised outside the District.

The reason I say that, Mr. Speaker and Members, is because according to the information that I have obtained, there are only 51 private schools in the District, as I indicated in the Committee on Rules. The maximum that a person with 185 percent above the poverty level could receive is \$3,000, unless they had some other supplemental help, and I do not know at this point where that would come from. That would mean that there are only seven schools in the District that have tuition of \$3,000 or less. The average is from \$6,000 to \$12,000. Six of those seven are religious schools.

So I would guess from that, since it allows the person to take the voucher anywhere they want to, that because there are very few schools in the District that have the low tuition, then most of that would be used outside the District. But most importantly, as it relates to this voucher system, there are some 80,000 children in the school district, and I am not here defending the District of Columbia School System, but I know for a fact that 50,000 students would be eligible for some form of scholarship, and if you take half of that money and apply it to scholarships and the other half to tutorial programs, it would work out that 1,500 to 2,000 students would probably be helped in one form or another if they could find a school that would take their voucher.

But what about the 97 percent of the rest of the schools? We are putting \$5,000 of Federal money in here to demonstrate what, I do not know. Private schools, under certain circumstances, can do a good job. Those circumstances are usually a strong parental support for a zest for education. As a matter of fact, the State of Wisconsin has a voucher system, and the testing has shown that those kids that have received the voucher, that this is no substantial difference in the testing of the ones in the public schools and the ones in private schools under the voucher. But there is a substantial difference between those students that voluntarily went to the school, and I would suggest to you that it has a lot to do with the kind the family support, the kind of transportation, the kind of environment that that person lives in, and, yes, under certain conditions, you can do very well.

So for this first year in putting \$5 million of Federal money into it for 1,500 to 2,000 people, in my estimation, does not prove a thing, and so I am going to oppose this conference report this evening.

I understand that those people who want to vote for it, who feel that the District needs the money, I understand that. It has been the level that has been applied here for Federal payment that on its merits the District deserves and should be provided to them without this kind of blackmail.

There is no doubt that there is a financial crisis, and unfortunately that works to the benefit of those who would hold this as a lever over their head.

But I would ask Members to vote "no" on this conference report, for as hard as the gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. GUNDERSON, has worked and the good things that Mr. JEFFORDS feels about the Commission and the activities of this chairman, they too, I would suggest to you, do not have the key in the 2 or 3 months in putting together legislation that is going to cure the deplorable conditions of this school district.

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

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished chairman of the authorizing subcommittee of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I just want to thank the appropriations subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from New York [Mr. WALSH], and the gentleman from California [Mr. DIXON], the chief minority member of the committee, for their work on this, working with the Senate.

This has been one of the more difficult appropriation bills this year. It has had a lot of contention in it. It is not a perfect bill as it comes here, but it is a bill that I can stand up here and proudly support.

It is going to give the District of Columbia the money needed. They have been faced with shutdowns and no Federal payment, and the result of that has been that a number of vendors who have been performing in good faith contractual obligations to the city have been stiffed for payments, sometimes delayed for months, because the city has not had the money to pay them.

This will help free that up. This will help allow the city to go ahead with its plans for its reinventing government proposals and put them, for the rest of the fiscal year, on a fair and even basis.

□ 1900

I congratulate the fiscal restraint that is shown in this bill by the gentleman from New York [Mr. WALSH] in writing this. I think it strikes a delicate but essential balance between what the city's obligations are and what they ought to be able to pay with a reasonable appropriation.

Let me also say that the act brings some reforms that are needed to the District of Columbia Government. We talked about some of the restrictions in spending. You have heard the discussion center on education.

Let me say right now the District of Columbia today is sending literally thousands of kids out to the suburbs to private schools to be educated. Many of these, as my colleague from New York noted, are individuals and students with special needs. This will expand that opportunity now to the poorest citizens in the District of Columbia, those who are below the poverty line, who would like to have the same kind of educational opportunities that are offered throughout the rest of this country, the same kind of educational opportunities, if you will, that Members of Congress and the President and the Vice President are able to offer their kids who have the opportunity to send their kids to the District of Columbia public schools, but decline to do so, and in lieu of that send their kids to private schools.

The poorest of the poor, those below the poverty line, there is a pool of money here that will allow those parents to operate for private schools in some cases and have some seed money, up to \$3,000 annually to be able to do that. The city currently is spending over \$9,000 per year per student, yet the output in terms of the number who are graduating, their test scores, going on to college, I think you could deem the public school system in the city today a miserable failure.

This proposal also calls for the establishment of charter schools. I think this is very, very important, because it will allow groups like the Smithsonian and other groups to set up charter schools which will offer opportunities to citizens from the District of Columbia to come in and get other options for education to encourage them to move up. If we really want to help this city, bring the city out of poverty, reduce crime, education is the key to doing that. The current educational system is not doing that.

This bill does not solve that problem, but it goes a long way toward that goal by starting some innovation and some competition within the public sector. I think that is essential.

I would finally add it is not a perfect bill in many ways, but this is a good bill, and one that I am proud to support at this point. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to belabor the point. The gentleman from Virginia [Mr. DAVIS] says this is a good bill. I honestly do not know how he knows that, because I do not think he knows what is in it.

But I would like to ask the chairman of the subcommittee, it is my understanding that there are two classes of scholarships in this bill. One is called a tuition scholarship, and the other is called an enhancement scholarship.

My question was whether you could take the tuition scholarship outside of the District? I thought the gentleman said yes, you could, and he used the example of children with special needs as

one example. Then I questioned is it only that class that could, and the gentleman's response was no. Then I went on talking about I thought that most of them would go outside the District then. Is that in essence it?

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

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

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I strongly would disagree with that. As I understand the way the bill is written, there is priority for use of all these funds within the District of Columbia first. If all of the spaces available are taken up within the District of Columbia, after that is accomplished, then the money would be available outside.

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, calling attention to page 160 of the bill on line 10, which indicates tuition scholarships, a tuition scholarship may be used only for payment of the cost of tuition and mandatory fees and transportation to attend an eligible institution, emphasis added, located within the geographic boundaries of the District of Columbia.

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

Mr. DIXON. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. GUNDERSON. Mr. Speaker, what we tried to point out earlier is that the scholarships generally do both have a priority for District of Columbia. There are two kinds of scholarships, a tuition scholarship and an enhancement scholarship.

Mr. DIXON. I said that a moment ago.

Mr. GUNDERSON. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, the tuition scholarships, as the gentleman read, can only go within the boundaries of the District of Columbia under the conference agreement. The other scholarships can go anywhere. But those are public school scholarships.

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, that was just my point. I asked the chairman of the subcommittee whether one could take the tuition scholarships and send that scholarship outside the District. He said yes, and he gave the illustration of one of the examples, a kid with special needs. I asked him was that the only example, and he said no.

My only point is that there is a great deal of confusion as to what is in this bill. Contrary to what everyone is talking about that it is a good bill and it has all this in it, I do not think anybody really knows, including the chairman, who I think his statement was wrong.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield further, there was a good deal of effort in the drawing up of this bill to make sure that the District had some local control. There is leeway within the legislation for the District and the Scholarship Board.

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, this is not leeway. This is

very clearly that you cannot take, which is good, the voucher out of the District when you are dealing with what you call a tuition scholarship. The tutorial thing, after school, you can take it any place. But if you are to get a voucher to go to school, you can only use it in the District. I think that is good. But it has been misstated here on the floor, plus the people who drafted the bill, they do not know what is in it. That is my only point.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. OBEY the distinguished minority member of the committee.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me simply say I have heard many a time Members take the floor of this House and object to the fact that the District of Columbia Government often did not seem to know what it was doing. At times I certainly have shared that perception. I know that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. But with all due respect, I think certainly on something which is such a major departure from existing law, the Congress ought to know what it is doing. Very frankly, on this issue, it does not.

I walked into the meeting of the conference this morning. We voted on this package. But up until the moment that we voted, I had not seen a single page of the legislative language, and neither had the gentleman from California. I think that is a quaint way to do business.

I have several objections to this bill. First of all, I am going to vote no because I do not believe that we should be adopting 168 pages of new language without at least having had the opportunity to analyze it, and we certainly did not.

Second, this bill is going to be used as a national precedent. And as soon as this bill is passed we are then going to see organizations with an ideological agenda who will begin to pressure each and every school district in the country to follow the same model. With all due respect, I think if we are going to create that kind of a precedent, at least again we ought to know what it is we are doing. I doubt that many Members do tonight.

Third, this Congress has already cut well over \$6 million in Federal funds for the District of Columbia school system in the Labor-HEW bill. Yet, despite the fact we are squeezing down that money, we are asking that \$5 million from a reduced budget level be set aside for this new experiment. As the gentleman from California has already indicated, even though there are about 50,000 youngsters who will be eligible for this experiment, less than 2,000 will probably be able to participate.

I think the precedent which is going to be set and the pressures which will then be brought upon State legislatures and Members of Congress to apply this all over the country, I think is a very high price to pay based on the kind of tokenism which this provision provides.

So while I have a great deal of respect for many of the people involved, and I have full confidence they are trying to do the right thing, I would simply suggest that this is a very high price for each of our school districts to pay to begin this tiny experiment here in the District of Columbia, and certainly the process which has been followed in bringing this product to the floor tonight does a disservice to each and every Member in this House and to the public we are supposed to represent.

Mr. Speaker, I would respectfully urge a "no" vote on the proposition when we get to the vote.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to respond to some of the other comments made earlier.

Mr. Speaker, we have worked on this bill now since almost a year ago this time. We had at least a dozen hearings. We had four or five meetings on the conference itself. The gentleman from California says he was not included in any of the discussion. That is not entirely true. He made some suggestions in other aspects of the bill that were heard and in fact actually compromised in honor.

But the issue of education here, what in God's name are you afraid of? The kids in this school system are being abused. We are trying to create some options for parents who do not have them now. Rich people can afford to go to private schools. Middle-class people who save their money can have that choice, too. Poor people do not have that choice. This is about providing kids a hand up and a handout and an opportunity to become leaders in this community, a community sorely in need of leaders.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. GUNDERSON].

(Mr. GUNDERSON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUNDERSON. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking the gentleman from New York [Mr. WALSH] and his staff for their cooperation, and the gentleman from California [Mr. DIXON], and his staff, and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON], for their patience.

Let me begin by saying the confusion you heard about the tuition versus the enhanced educational scholarships is my fault. To Mr. WALSH's credit, he looked at me for assurance, and I miscommunicated with him. I want everybody to understand, blame me for that.

Having said that, I want to also make it clear that Mr. WALSH, for the first time in this debate, just mentioned the words "school children." Somehow in this whole debate we have lost sight of the very purpose we are here for, which is to try to help the children of the District of Columbia.

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

Mr. GUNDERSON. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, first of all, as I indicated to the gentleman, I have the greatest respect for the gentleman and his activities in this area. I just think the gentleman is off on the wrong foot.

More importantly, I mentioned the school kids very clearly. I said there were 80,000, 50,000 of whom would be eligible, but only about 1,500 to 2,000 could be funded. Do not characterize the debate as no one talking about the kids.

Mr. GUNDERSON. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I would say the gentleman mentioned the word "children" and would also say the gentleman from New York [Mr. WALSH] is the only one that said let us talk about what is good for the children of District of Columbia rather than what is good for the bureaucracy or the teacher's union or somebody else.

□ 1915

The gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY], my colleague and friend, suggested that what we are going to establish here today is a national precedent. Know what? I hope he is right. I hope he is right, because I would suggest this is the first time in America where we have sat down and, first and foremost, at the request of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON] we have gone to the community and listened to those people and asked them what they thought we ought to do. Based upon their suggestions, literally hundreds if not thousands of them, we put together what I would like to believe is the most comprehensive education reform initiative that Congress has ever considered.

First and foremost, it is the first time that I know of where we have designed a system, a delivery system recognizing we do not have the public resources. We do not have them in this Congress, and they do not have them in the District of Columbia to pay for everything that needs to be done to help these children. So we have designed a system that gets the private sector to come in and provide additional money, additional scholarship money, additional foundation money, additional help to fix the school buildings, additional help to provide the technology.

The fact is, under this education reform initiative, what my colleagues are going to vote for tonight is a proposal that provides \$96 million in new Federal funds for the D.C. school system at a time in which we are balancing the budget. It also is going to result in a foundation matching that \$96 million over 5 years with 96 million additional dollars. We project that the private sector will provide \$36 million in new technology assistance grants to provide the computers and the technology equipment these students from these schools need to learn.

Then we project that there will be \$100 million in bona fide donations to the District of Columbia schools repairing those facilities and making them workable and learnable again.

Add all of that up, and what do we have? We have 328 million new dollars for D.C. children over the next 5 years.

Know what? At a maximum, if the D.C. Council approves it, up to 10 percent of that money could end up in private schools. Not a penny could be used for religious instruction.

So tonight, the Republicans are bringing those who support increased funds for public schools, increased resources for public schools, we are bringing a proposal that not only does real comprehensive reform, but it does so through the public schools of D.C. for the children of D.C. I encourage its support and its approval.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). The gentleman from California [Mr. DIXON] has 11 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from New York [Mr. WALSH] has 13½ minutes remaining.

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON].

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the fifth month of the fiscal year, the appropriation of the District has finally come to the floor. This is the first time in more than 200 years that the D.C. appropriation has been so late. The subcommittee was prepared to move much sooner, but a disagreement on vouchers has held the bill up until now. Because of the District's dire financial condition, I hope all will agree that we must do whatever is necessary to avoid similar delay in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I want to work even more closely with the gentleman from New York [Mr. WALSH], chairman, and the gentleman from California [Mr. DIXON], ranking member, on next year's appropriations to try to help prevent any similar delay.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON] and the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY] for the extra hours of work this bill has required of them. I thank the gentleman from New York [Mr. WALSH], the chairman, and the gentleman from California [Mr. DIXON], the ranking member, who had the major responsibility for the hard work that has been done on this bill.

Very special thanks are due to Senator JEFFORDS, who worked hard for a compromise and is himself a volunteer in the D.C. public schools. The gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. GUNDERSON], who is the author of the entire education reform package attached to this bill, of which vouchers is only a tiny part, deserves to be congratulated for exceptional service beyond the call of duty. The gentleman could not have spent more time or effort on the education package if his next election depended on it. Unfortunately, the gen-

tleman from Wisconsin has decided to retire, taking with him his special talent and effectiveness for making real changes in a collegial fashion, the only way to assure that change sticks.

The original package of the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. GUNDERSON] was the result of countless hours of work with D.C. residents and officials. The gentleman's tough package of reforms and benefits demonstrates that real changes can indeed be produced on a home rule basis. The voucher provision that has held this bill up for 4 months was not in the original package designed in cooperation with District residents.

Mr. Speaker, this bill puts me in an awkward position because I do not support many of its provisions. At the same time, it is impossible for me to oppose the appropriation bill for my own city 4 months into the appropriation year, after consultation with the mayor.

I should note first that among the improvements in the bill are the domestic partners restriction and the abortion restriction. I do not support these provisions, but each has been improved over prior provisions that actually changed DC law.

The abortion provision was especially onerous. Its restrictions were worse than were placed on other jurisdictions. I appreciate that, however unacceptable, these two provisions are at least no worse than the strictures under which the District has historically suffered.

Like me, the mayor does not support the voucher provision that has been the subject of most of the contention. If I am in an awkward position, he of course is in an impossible position. Only 2-weeks ago, the District's financial position left residents, businesses and the Federal Government itself snowed in when the District could not get vendors in the midst of a blizzard.

The Congress shut down the District for a full week in November. During 4 months without an appropriation, the District's financial position has deteriorated.

The negotiations between the gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. GUNDERSON, and Senator JEFFORDS have improved the bill and left open the possibility that no tuition vouchers will occur.

If the scholarship board and the council cannot agree, no voucher program can go forward. This provision, vesting authority with local authorities, is cited by Mayor Barry in indicating his support for passage, if not for the specific provisions of this bill.

I am doubtful that the voucher program will go into effect at all. A court suit challenging the constitutionality of the voucher proposal is inevitable. For the first time in more than 200 years that we have been a nation, this bill would allow direct tuition payments to religious schools. The provision allowing for the vouchers to be vetoed at the city council does not cure

the problem. For a court, the issue would be, is the voucher proposal allowing for the funding of religious schools unconstitutional on its face? I believe that it is.

Ironically, the voucher provision respects home rule with one hand and disrespects it with the other. The DC council has to approve the plan. Indeed, the council could approve programs, such as afterschool programs in private schools that are in keeping with existing law and practices, allowing public school funds to follow children to private schools for special purposes.

At the same time the scholarship board is anti-home rule. It is a Federal board with a token appointment by the mayor. The Speaker, minority leader and majority and minority leaders of the Senate are the appointing authorities for a local school entity. How is that for devaluation of power back to the localities?

Ultimately, the appropriations bill is perhaps the ultimate home rule bill. I have, therefore, consulted with District officials. Both the mayor and I, I repeat, oppose the voucher provision. He believes that the way to address that provision is through the home rule council provision in the bill.

The position of the District, therefore, is that the only way to bring any relief to the District, which is insolvent at this time, after months of great suffering, is to free its appropriation.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON] for her summation of this bill. No one knows how important this bill is to the District more than she does. She knows that the money is needed. She knows that the District is hard-pressed.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure I understand the difficult position that the gentlewoman is in, because there may be an issue or two in the bill with which she has a philosophical problem. But overall, I think she has some sympathy for us supporting this bill. She did not support it, I do not want to put words in her mouth, but I understand the dilemma that she has. I would say to my colleague, I am deeply concerned that if we do not get an appropriation conference report passed today, I think it would be very, very difficult for us to come back with a continuing resolution that authorized or appropriated any of this Federal money, at least for the foreseeable future. I know that would be a difficulty for the District.

We have to move on. The status quo is not acceptable. It is not defensible. I see this conference report as progress.

While, again, there are issues in here that everyone may not agree with, it is needed and it is necessary.

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

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. COLEMAN], a member of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I think it should come as no surprise to anyone when the gentleman says there are two classes of children. We have two classes of women in the bill: the rich, who can afford an abortion for a young teenager, and the poor, who, of course, cannot get one because if they need Federal help they cannot get it because of this bill.

So we recognize there is a difference there for young women. So we should not be surprised about the fact that the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. GUNDERSON] stands up and says that he hopes that this will be the new national thing that we are going to do.

Mr. Speaker, I want to know this. How many of the private schools are going to accept vouchers and take kids with learning disabilities, physical impairments, mental problems? How many of those private schools are going to take these special kinds of cases and special children that the public school are required to take? Are they going to take all of those?

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

Mr. COLEMAN. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. GUNDERSON. Mr. Speaker, I am glad the gentleman asked that question. We have total prohibition on any kind of discrimination, and we require that any private school has to take an academically representative group of students that apply.

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, academically representative. The gentleman has not answered the question.

The reality is that what we are doing here is picking and choosing and leaving all the rest of the children in the public school, and I know that is the goal of the Republican agenda. I am not too worried, I will tell the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY] that the rest of the country will follow this example because it will not work.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. GUNDERSON], I am informed that the bill, as a matter of fact, allows private schools to screen out and deny admission to students on the basis of religion, disability, test scores, and behavior. That, in fact, the corporation encourages the private school not to do that. After the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER] speaks, we will come back and look at the specific language that says that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER].

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in reluctant opposition to this bill. However, I am pleased the conference report language contains language I offered during full committee markup. The language requests the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority to address in its March 1996 financial report and plan, first, how the District plans to restore funds removed

from the Blue Plains budget and second, the timing for that restoration.

During fiscal year 1994, over \$80 million dollars was transferred from the Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund. The Blue Plains budget falls within this fund. This substantial loss of funds had led to serious maintenance and plant operations problems at the facility.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency which recently inspected the facility, the plant is short of staff, maintenance, and chemicals. These shortages could potentially lead to a real threat of sewage flowing into the Potomac River. This can cause a serious threat to the ratepayers and suburban jurisdictions and have a devastating environmental impact on the region.

During its inspection, EPA found failure to pay vendors and contractors in a timely manner has resulted in contractors walking off their jobs at Blue Plains and vendors failing to make deliveries of chemicals or supply spare parts. This further hampers the plant's ability to operate and maintain plant equipment. Moreover, lack of preventive maintenance of and replacement parts for essential treatment process units has resulted in many units becoming inoperable and/or inaccurate.

According to EPA, the current level of staff has had a deleterious effect on plant operations: Shortages in the required number of engineers has restricted use of the plants ability to monitor the large number of environmentally sensitive processes, plan for necessary maintenance, and oversee ongoing construction projects.

In turn, EPA required the District to submit a short and long action plan demonstrating the city's ability to address current problems and how the city plans to meet its long term obligations.

The District submitted its plan to EPA on October 13. After a brief review of the plan, early indications are that the plans lay out proper activities, yet it is still uncertain how the District will be able to finance these activities and how the transferred funds will be returned in a timely fashion.

Current conditions at Blue Plains pose a health and safety threat to the sewage rate payers and residents of the metropolitan area who live downstream from the flow of untreated sewage. It poses a serious threat to the fragile environmental conditions of the Potomac, Chesapeake Bay, Anacostia, and Patuxent Rivers and the water life they support.

In order to prevent danger to life or environment, swift return of the funds is necessary so that the Blue Plains facility can return to operating in a more safe and efficient manner.

□ 1930

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON], the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Appropriations.

(Mr. LIVINGSTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I just want to take this opportunity to commend the distinguished chairman of the subcommittee, the distinguished ranking minority member, the gentleman from California, and all of the members of the subcommittee. I realize that my friend, the gentleman from California, is not entirely happy with this bill, but this, for my friends on the Republican side, is a good bill.

Members can always find reasons to vote against this bill: they do not represent the District of Columbia, they are back in California or the Midwest or the Northwest or the Northeast or wherever. The fact is, we are not going to get a better bill than this. This has gone through the process, through the hoops. There are reasons for conservatives to be happy, and there are reasons for moderates and liberals to be happy. The most important thing is that we are paying the bills for the District, and we are getting the District on a track toward downsizing their ever-increasing demands for more taxpayers' dollars.

This is a good bill. Let us put this to rest, and frankly, this will bring us closer to completing our appropriations process for fiscal year 1996. When this passes it will mean we only have four more bills on the appropriation cycle.

I urge my colleagues on both sides to vote for this bill.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON], a member of the subcommittee.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I will not speak to the details of this bill. We have been battling it around enough. I do want to speak to the spirit of the bill and the compromise that went into it.

We all knew when we went into this bill that Washington, DC was in financial trouble. We all knew that Washington, DC had to change. We all knew that the estimates that we had for revenues and taxes and savings based on past legislation never came through quite the way we guessed they would. We knew it would be difficult. Yet, somehow through this process, we have a bill together. Now it appears that folks on one side of the aisle do not like it because it is too conservative and folks on the other side of the aisle do not like it because it is too liberal.

Mr. Speaker, this bill gives \$1.4 billion as a budget for the District. That is a lot of money for a city of 554,000 people, which is about 50,000 lower than it had 10 years ago. Because of the many problems they have had, people have moved out of it.

This bill reduces their spending about \$150 million. We know on the committee we actually passed a bill at one time that had \$260 million in sav-

ings, but we were unable to get that through the Senate and we were unable to move it through the floor. In anticipation of being unable to move it through the floor, we have changed that amount of money.

We have the Financial Control Board. It is something that I think is going to take many, many years to change the city around, but I have here a list of folks who are going to vote "no" because the spending level is too high and the changes do not go far enough. Yet, as I hear from this side of the aisle, you have a list of people who are going to vote "no" because the cuts are too much.

Mr. Speaker, I think in order to keep this process going, in order to not go through the continuing resolution route, this bill represents the best compromise. We will never have a perfect Washington, DC bill. It is never going to be the way the liberals would write it, it is never going to be the way the conservatives would write it, but this is our best shot for a reasonable bill. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote "yes."

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. RIGGS].

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I rise to salute my colleagues, the gentleman from New York [Mr. WALSH] and the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. GUNDERSON], for their excellent work on this legislation, and to urge my Democrat colleagues to support the conference report on the District of Columbia appropriations bill.

This is a good opportunity to put your vote where your rhetoric has been. In fact, we have heard repeatedly claims from this side of the aisle during this session of Congress that we Republicans are somehow antieducation. The District of Columbia appropriations bill, which includes the Gunderson package of educational reforms, is a very proeducation bill.

We are all part-time residents of the Washington, DC area because of our congressional duties, so we have heard the horror stories about the District of Columbia public schools. For example, we have heard stories regarding the restrooms at the schools, so unsanitary that the kids refuse to use them. We have heard stories about classrooms going without textbooks, about students going without teachers or having to face a succession of teachers who are in the schools on a temporary or substitute basis.

Listen to what the Gunderson bill does. First of all, it creates public charter schools. It would allow the District of Columbia public schools to align with other educational facilities in the District of Columbia such as the National Science Foundation, the National Gallery of Art, the Library of Congress, to help establish these charter schools.

In addition, these charter schools would help restructure the existing public schools, allowing innovative

principals and teachers to work with parents, students, and academic associations to overhaul a system that is failing our kids. Make no doubt about it, the District of Columbia public schools are failing our kids. They have the worst test scores of any school district, any urban inner city school district in the country, and only 56 percent of the kids in the District of Columbia public schools actually graduate. This is a good bill that brings education innovation and progress to the District of Columbia public schools.

You say you are for education. You say we are antieducation. Here is an opportunity to join together in a bipartisan fashion to improve these schools, and give all students in these schools some educational opportunity and a new lease on life.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. GUNDERSON].

(Mr. GUNDERSON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUNDERSON. Mr. Speaker, I just want to respond to the concerns of the ranking member, the gentleman from California [Mr. DIXON], earlier about where the scholarship money would go.

First of all, on page 160 of the bill, we require on line 8 that the corporation shall ensure an equitable distribution of scholarship funds to students at diverse academic achievement levels. On page 172 of the bill, section 2927, we require that all eligible institutions participating in the scholarship program must be participating in all civil rights acts, including section 504 of the rehabilitation act.

Then we go on, on page 173, section 2928, children with disabilities, that any private school that participates in the scholarship program must meet all of the idea requirements here as determined by the District of Columbia Board of Education.

Finally, I would point out on page 177, the Department of Education at the end of 4 years must do a comparison, which includes a comparison of test scores between scholarship students and D.C. public school students of similar backgrounds and academic achievement.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I have no more requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time to close.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). The gentleman from California [Mr. DIXON] has 2 minutes remaining.

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

Mr. Speaker, I will have a motion to recommit to strike the voucher section. Let me speak very fast. The gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. GUNDERSON] says on page 160, line 6, he reads, and he reads part of the paragraph. The paragraph reads: "The corporation," now this is the person giving the scholarship, "The corporation shall attempt

to ensure an equitable distribution of funds to students of diverse academic backgrounds," "shall attempt."

The other side of it is the recipient and the school. He reads, I guess, part of the section on page 172. Keep in mind that I said that a person could be turned down for religion, disability, test scores, or behavior. In short, the Civil Rights Act and the AIDS Discrimination Act say nothing about a kid being turned away for behavior or for test scores. I am correct, a school can turn down somebody for behavior. They can turn them down for test scores. Yes, the corporation shall attempt to make a distribution.

At the appropriate time I will be asking to return this bill for the purpose of striking this section. Perhaps we can write a better voucher plan. I am interested in the kids of this District, too. From one through six, I went to school here. I am interested in all of the kids, not the 1,500 that this voucher system would serve. At the appropriate time I will ask Members to vote aye on a motion to recommit.

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

Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. We stand here and fiddle while Rome burns all around us. It is time for action. The status quo that is the District of Columbia is no longer defensible. We need to move and we need to move now. You can see how difficult any change is. We are talking about minimal change, but this is all we could get, and it is a fight, but it is a worthy fight. The future of the kids of this city, is at stake.

We have an opportunity here to give them some positive options, give them some opportunity in life that they did not have before, and I just cannot understand why we would not take that action.

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

Mr. WALSH. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. RIGGS. For a point of clarification, Mr. Speaker, I do not know if the ranking member is following our conversation, but I would like to clarify one more time for our colleagues that under the gentleman's proposal, and in particular the Gunderson provisions, it would permit low-income parents to choose a private school if they are dissatisfied with their child's public school.

So under that scenario, if a low-income family is dissatisfied with the education, the performance of the public school their child is attending, then they would have another option available to them. They would be able to choose a private school through the use of the scholarships or vouchers that are in the gentleman's bill?

Mr. WALSH. That is correct. That is what this is about, providing some choice to the parents.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, let me say, in our relationship with the District of Columbia, we need to pay them

what we have promised. We need to make that formula payment. Basically, it is paying our rent for being in this district. This is the vehicle to do it. If we do not do it with this vehicle, I do not know if we will get it done.

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the House for 1 minute and ask permission to extend and revise my remarks.

It is time for Congress to recognize that school choice is a viable and legitimate option. This is not an issue of preferring either private or public schools, but who should have the fundamental right to choose what is best for their children.

For those who can afford it, school choice is already an option. In fact, an increasing number of parents, including the President, are sending their children to private schools. Unfortunately, this option is not available for the rest of us.

In the end, this is really about who is more capable of caring for children. If you believe government cares more about your children than yourself, then we should keep the status quo and make minor changes. However, if you have the best in mind for your children, why can't you determine what school your child attends?

School choice is about giving parents and their children access to quality education. In a time when many schools are deteriorating, we need to reform our education system and give parents choice.

Mr. SAWYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the conference report. As a former mayor, I sympathize with the need for a city to have a set budget to work from. I greatly regret that Washington, DC, has had to wait this long. However, the conferees have made it impossible for me to support this legislation by including a voucher proposal that represents a radical shift in Federal education policy.

This voucher proposal poses as a locally controlled program, while it really holds hostage millions of dollars that could be used for children in the District schools to force the city council to accept vouchers that they have said they do not want. I see many problems with this voucher program. However, the one that I find most objectionable is the lack of provisions for an unbiased, scientific evaluation of the effects of this experiment.

This legislation is unclear on who evaluates the program. In one place the legislation seems to state that the corporation administering the voucher program evaluates itself. In another, the department evaluates the program, but only after 4 years, and is only required to take into account a limited amount of data. Test scores, graduation rates, and parental satisfaction are mentioned as criteria for evaluation, but not the education levels of the parents or information about the families. There is no provision that the schools that accept the scholarships must administer the same tests so as to provide comparable data. This bill does not even specify the need to examine the overall effect this program has on the D.C. public schools. I thought that was the whole reason for reform.

This is a broad-based experiment in children's lives and yet we are not even going to evaluate the results properly. That is unconscionable. For these reasons, and for all of the others mentioned by my colleagues, I must oppose this conference report.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, with some reluctance, I rise to oppose the D.C. appropriations bill and to urge my colleagues to support the motion to recommit that will prevent the use of Federal funds for private school vouchers.

Here we are again, on the floor of the House debating an appropriations bill that should have been passed 4 months ago. But the Republican majority continues to mismanage the people's business, seeking to bootstrap their radical ideas to regular spending bills. And this D.C. appropriations bill is the latest egregious example of their scheme of legislative blackmail.

I commend my colleague from Wisconsin, Mr. GUNDERSON, for his good faith attempt to help the District of Columbia improve its public schools. The citizens of this city and their elected officials have embraced many of his ideas. But, they have categorically rejected the idea that public dollars should be siphoned off to finance private school education. And, yet this conference report ignores the expressed will of D.C. citizens because radical elements in the Republican Party insist that its their way or the highway. Those same elements have made clear their intent to destroy public education, and they are willing to trample on the democratic rights of over one-half million U.S. citizens in order to gain a foothold in their war against public education. While this Capitol Building is the seat of national Government, it is not the "big house" and the District of Columbia is not Jerry Falwell's plantation.

Isn't it ironic that the very people who complain about Federal intrusion into the affairs of local school districts, and other aspects of modern life for that matter, are fighting to impose a federally funded, federally mandated private school voucher plan on the District of Columbia? Rest assured, if they try to force that idea on my constituents they will be in for the fight of their political lives.

Mr. Speaker, by substantial margins the American people rate improvement of public education as their No. 1 priority. I urge my colleagues to reject this attempt to hijack Federal tax dollars that instead should address that priority.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time has expired. Without objection, the previous question is ordered.

There was no objection.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT OFFERED BY MR. DIXON

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the conference report?

Mr. DIXON. I am, in its present form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. DIXON moves to recommit the conference report on the bill (H.R. 2546) to the committee of the conference with the instruction that the conferees amend the conference report to delete the following provisions: \$5,000,000 for low-income scholarships under the heading "Federal Contribution for Education Reform", \$5,000,000 for the District of Columbia Scholarship Corporation under the heading "Education Reform", and the entire text of "Subtitle N—Low-Income Scholarships" of Title II authorizing scholarships for low-income students.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, there is no debate on this motion. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

Mr. DIXON. 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 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 180, nays 232, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 22]

YEAS—180

Abercrombie	Gutierrez	Oliver
Ackerman	Hall (OH)	Ortiz
Andrews	Hamilton	Orton
Baesler	Harman	Owens
Baldacci	Hastings (FL)	Pallone
Barrett (WI)	Hefner	Pastor
Becerra	Hilliard	Payne (NJ)
Bellenson	Hinchey	Payne (VA)
Bentsen	Holden	Pelosi
Berman	Horn	Peterson (FL)
Bishop	Hoyer	Peterson (MN)
Boehlert	Jackson (IL)	Pickett
Bonior	Jackson-Lee	Pomeroy
Borski	(TX)	Poshard
Boucher	Jacobs	Rahall
Brown (CA)	Jefferson	Ramstad
Brown (FL)	Johnson (SD)	Rangel
Brown (OH)	Johnson, E. B.	Reed
Cardin	Johnston	Richardson
Clay	Kanjorski	Rivers
Clayton	Kaptur	Roemer
Clement	Kennedy (MA)	Roybal-Allard
Clyburn	Kennedy (RI)	Rush
Coleman	Kennelly	Sabo
Collins (IL)	Kildee	Sanders
Collins (MI)	Kleczka	Sawyer
Condit	Klink	Schroeder
Conyers	LaFalce	Schumer
Costello	Lantos	Scott
Coyne	Levin	Serrano
Danner	Lewis (GA)	Sisisky
DeFazio	Lincoln	Skaggs
DeLauro	Lofgren	Skelton
Dellums	Lowey	Slaughter
Deutsch	Luther	Spratt
Dicks	Maloney	Stark
Dingell	Manton	Stokes
Dixon	Markey	Studds
Doggett	Martinez	Tejeda
Dooley	Mascara	Thompson
Doyle	Matsui	Thornton
Durbin	McCarthy	Thurman
Edwards	McDermott	Torkildsen
Engel	McHale	Torres
English	McHugh	Torricelli
Eshoo	McKinney	Towns
Evans	McNulty	Traficant
Farr	Meehan	Velazquez
Fattah	Meek	Vento
Fazio	Menendez	Visclosky
Fields (LA)	Mfume	Volkmer
Foglietta	Miller (CA)	Ward
Ford	Minge	Waters
Frank (MA)	Mink	Watt (NC)
Frost	Moakley	Waxman
Furse	Mollohan	Wise
Gejdenson	Murtha	Woolsey
Gibbons	Nadler	Wynn
Gonzalez	Neal	Yates
Gordon	Oberstar	
Green	Obey	

NAYS—232

Allard	Bevill	Burton
Archer	Bilbray	Buyer
Armey	Bilirakis	Callahan
Bachus	Billey	Calvert
Baker (CA)	Blute	Camp
Baker (LA)	Boehner	Campbell
Ballenger	Bonilla	Canady
Barcia	Bono	Castle
Barr	Brewster	Chabot
Barrett (NE)	Browder	Chambliss
Bartlett	Brownback	Chenoweth
Barton	Bryant (TN)	Christensen
Bass	Bunn	Chrysler
Bateman	Bunning	Clinger
Bereuter	Burr	Coble

Coburn	Hostettler	Quillen
Collins (GA)	Houghton	Quinn
Combest	Hunter	Radanovich
Cooley	Hutchinson	Regula
Cox	Hyde	Riggs
Cramer	Inglis	Roberts
Crane	Istook	Rogers
Crapo	Johnson (CT)	Rohrabacher
Creameans	Johnson, Sam	Ros-Lehtinen
Cubin	Jones	Roth
Cunningham	Kasich	Royce
Davis	Kelly	Salmon
de la Garza	Kim	Sanford
Deal	King	Saxton
Diaz-Balart	Kingston	Scarborough
Doolittle	Klug	Schaefer
Dornan	Knollenberg	Schiff
Dreier	Kolbe	Seastrand
Duncan	LaHood	Sensenbrenner
Dunn	Latham	Shadegg
Ehlers	LaTourette	Shaw
Ehrlich	Laughlin	Shays
Emerson	Lazio	Shuster
Ensign	Levin (CA)	Skeen
Everett	Lewis (KY)	Smith (MI)
Ewing	Lightfoot	Smith (NJ)
Fawell	Livingston	Smith (TX)
Flanagan	Lipinski	Solomon
Foley	Livingston	Souder
Forbes	LoBiondo	Spence
Fowler	Longley	Stearns
Fox	Lucas	Stenholm
Franks (CT)	Manzullo	Stump
Franks (NJ)	Martini	Stupak
Frelinghuysen	McCollum	Talent
Frisa	McCrary	Tanner
Funderburk	McDade	Tate
Gallegly	McInnis	Tauzin
Ganske	McKeon	Taylor (MS)
Gekas	Metcalf	Taylor (NC)
Gilchrist	Meyers	Thomas
Gillmor	Mica	Thornberry
Gipmar	Miller (FL)	Tiaht
Goodlatte	Molinar	Upton
Goodling	Montgomery	Vucanovich
Goss	Moorhead	Waldholtz
Graham	Moran	Walker
Greenwood	Morella	Walsh
Gunderson	Myers	Wamp
Gutknecht	Myrick	Watts (OK)
Hall (TX)	Nethercutt	Weldon (FL)
Hancock	Neumann	Weldon (PA)
Hansen	Ney	Weller
Hastert	Norwood	White
Hastings (WA)	Nussle	Whitfield
Hayworth	Packard	Wicker
Hefley	Parker	Wolf
Heineman	Paxton	Young (AK)
Herger	Petri	Young (FL)
Hilleary	Pombo	Zeliff
Hobson	Porter	Zimmer
Hoekstra	Portman	
Hoke	Pryce	

NOT VOTING—21

Bryant (TX)	Gephardt	Rose
Chapman	Geren	Roukema
DeLay	Hayes	Smith (WA)
Dickey	Largent	Stockman
Fields (TX)	Leach	Williams
Filner	McIntosh	Wilson
Flake	Oxley	Wyden

□ 2003

Mr. GUTKNECHT and Mr. RADANOVICH changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. BAESLER and Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). The question is on the conference report.

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XV, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 211, nays 201, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 23]

YEAS—211

Abercrombie	Gekas	Morella
Archer	Gilchrist	Myrick
Armey	Gillmor	Nethercutt
Bachus	Gingrich	Neumann
Baker (CA)	Gonzalez	Ney
Baker (LA)	Goodlatte	Norwood
Ballenger	Nussle	Goodling
Barcia	Goss	Packard
Barrett (NE)	Graham	Parker
Bartlett	Greenwood	Pastor
Barton	Gunderson	Paxon
Bass	Gutknecht	Pombo
Bateman	Hastert	Porter
Bereuter	Hastings (WA)	Portman
	Hayworth	Pryce
	Hefley	Quinn
	Hefner	Radanovich
	Heineman	Regula
	Herger	Richardson
	Hobson	Riggs
	Bono	Rogers
	Brownback	Rohrabacher
	Bryant (TN)	Ros-Lehtinen
	Bunn	Roth
	Bunning	Royce
	Burr	Sanford
	Burton	Saxton
	Buyer	Scarborough
	Callahan	Schaefer
	Calvert	Schiff
	Camp	Johnson (CT)
	Canady	Johnson, Sam
	Castle	Jones
	Chabot	Kasich
	Chambliss	Kelly
	Christensen	Kim
	Chrysler	Kingston
	Clement	Knollenberg
	Clinger	Kolbe
	Collins (GA)	LaHood
	Cox	Latham
	Crane	LaTourette
	Crapo	Laughlin
	Creameans	Lewis (CA)
	Cubin	Lewis (KY)
	Davis	Lightfoot
	de la Garza	Lincoln
	Deal	Linder
	Diaz-Balart	Lipinski
	Doolittle	Livingston
	Dornan	LoBiondo
	Dreier	Longley
	Dunn	Lucas
	Edwards	Manton
	Ehlers	Manzullo
	Ehrlich	Martini
	Emerson	Matsui
	Ensign	McCollum
	Ewing	McCrary
	Fawell	McDade
	Flanagan	McHugh
	Foley	McInnis
	Forbes	McKeon
	Fox	McNulty
	Franks (CT)	Metcalf
	Franks (NJ)	Mica
	Frelinghuysen	Miller (FL)
	Frisa	Minge
	Funderburk	Molinar
	Gallegly	Moorhead
	Ganske	Moran

NAYS—201

Ackerman	Cardin	Dicks
Allard	Chenoweth	Dingell
Andrews	Clay	Dixon
Baesler	Clayton	Doggett
Baldacci	Clyburn	Dooley
Barr	Coble	Doyle
Barrett (WI)	Coburn	Duncan
Becerra	Coleman	Durbin
Beilenson	Collins (IL)	Engel
Bentsen	Collins (MI)	English
Berman	Combest	Eshoo
Bevill	Condit	Evans
Bishop	Conyers	Everett
Boehlert	Cooley	Farr
Bonior	Costello	Fattah
Borski	Coyne	Fazio
Boucher	Cramer	Fields (LA)
Brewster	Cunningham	Foglietta
Browder	Danner	Ford
Brown (CA)	DeFazio	Fowler
Brown (FL)	DeLauro	Frank (MA)
Brown (OH)	Dellums	Frost
Campbell	Deutsch	Furse

Gejdenson	Martinez	Rush
Gibbons	Mascara	Sabo
Gilman	McCarthy	Salmon
Gordon	McDermott	Sanders
Green	McHale	Sawyer
Gutierrez	McKinney	Schroeder
Hall (OH)	Meehan	Schumer
Hall (TX)	Meek	Scott
Hamilton	Menendez	Sensenbrenner
Hancock	Meyers	Serrano
Harman	Mfume	Sisisky
Hastings (FL)	Miller (CA)	Skaggs
Hilleary	Mink	Slaughter
Hilliard	Moakley	Spratt
Hinchey	Mollohan	Stark
Holden	Montgomery	Stenholm
Horn	Murtha	Stokes
Hoyer	Myers	Studds
Jackson (IL)	Nadler	Stump
Jackson-Lee	Neal	Taylor (MS)
(TX)	Oberstar	Tejeda
Jacobs	Obey	Thompson
Jefferson	Olver	Thornberry
Johnson (SD)	Ortiz	Thornton
Johnson, E. B.	Orton	Thurman
Johnston	Owens	Tiahrt
Kanjorski	Pallone	Torkildsen
Kaptur	Payne (NJ)	Torricelli
Kennedy (MA)	Payne (VA)	Towns
Kennedy (RI)	Pelosi	Traficant
Kennelly	Peterson (FL)	Velazquez
Kildee	Peterson (MN)	Vento
Klecзка	Petri	Visclosky
Klink	Pickett	Volkmer
Klug	Pomeroy	Ward
LaFalce	Poshard	Waters
Lantos	Quillen	Watt (NC)
Lazio	Rahall	Waxman
Levin	Ramstad	Wise
Lewis (GA)	Rangel	Woolsey
Lofgren	Reed	Wynn
Lowey	Rivers	Yates
Luther	Roberts	Zimmer
Maloney	Roemer	
Markey	Roybal-Allard	

NOT VOTING—22

Bryant (TX)	Geren	Roukema
Chapman	Hansen	Smith (WA)
DeLay	Hayes	Stockman
Dickey	Largent	Williams
Fields (TX)	Leach	Wilson
Filner	McIntosh	Wyden
Flake	Oxley	
Gephardt	Rose	

□ 2021

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

Messrs. ZELIFF, BROWBACK, and SCARBOROUGH changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. HUNTER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. HUNTER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA DEFAULTED?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, the D.C. appropriation has just passed this House after 4 very arduous months. The concern that I have had all along relates to the financial condition of the District.

As I have seen what has happened to this city, I have not been able to keep from analyzing the situation of the District to the situation that the United States of America could find itself. The District, Mr. Speaker, courted default as it was running out of money. It did not know what to do or could not do what had to be done, and so a financial authority was appointed, and that authority was necessary in order for the District to be able to borrow.

As one contemplates the problems facing this body with a debt limit, one wonders what would happen if the United States of America got close to default.

I can say this to you, Mr. Speaker, there would not be any higher authority to take over the United States of America. We are the ultimate authority, and so I would hope that we all try to figure out how to make sure that we do not get any closer to the threat of default.

I wanted to talk about the threat of default for a moment. The District, for example, has heard in the last couple of days from the bond ratings that they still do not believe that the District will rise again, and they are considering lowering the District's bond rating yet again. What trembles and shakes that has sent through the District of Columbia. In effect, Moody's did the same thing to the United States of America this very week when it threatened to downgrade our credit, the best credit in the world for over 200 years.

I want, therefore, to ask this body to consider not default but what the threat of default can do to interest rates, to confidence, how it can ripple through our country and through the world.

□ 2030

I want, therefore, to ask this body to consider not default, but what the threat of default can do to interest rates, to confidence, and how it can ripple through our country and the world.

I recognize the United States of America and the District of Columbia are different. Yet the fact is that there have been only a few large jurisdictions that have ever been threatened with default, and, for all of those, the results have been catastrophic.

So I would ask this body in the next few weeks to try to consider what is at stake. History will remember us for how we handle the first threat of de-

fault in the history of the United States. The threat of default is as bad in a very real sense as default itself. Who can forget what led to the budget agreement under which we now operate? What led to that agreement, of course, was a crash on Wall Street that came one day, absolutely unexpected, that came one day without warning. It is the possibility that the credit of the United States could be affected without warning that I hope this body will take into account in deciding what to do with the debt limit.

I am asking this body to respect the long record of the United States and to pass a clean debt limit bill. We must not allow the shutdown experience to be born again in the debt limit bill. The only way to respond to the experience we have had in the last couple of months with the shutdown experience is to make sure we do not repeat bad history. If we are ever to repeat that history, we certainly should not repeat it with the full faith and credit of the United States.

I know what it is to lose your credit. I am from the District of Columbia, which today does not have credit. I ask my country then to look at its Capital City and to make sure that its credit in no way resembles that of its fallen city. I appreciate that there is a great difference. I hope that difference will continue to be great, and I hope that we will return to this body, not to have 4 days of haggling about what to do about the debt limit or what to attach to the debt limit, but that we will march forward together in a bipartisan way and pass, finally, one clean debt limit bill.

BUDGET MATTERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHRYSLER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Hawaii [Mr. ABERCROMBIE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, in light of Ms. NORTON's just-delivered remarks, I would like to say as someone coming from the last State to be admitted to the Union, the State of Hawaii, that I recognize only too fully what the implications are when you find yourself without representation, when you find yourself having to look to the good will of others.

In this particular instance, Mr. Speaker, I think that we need to pay some final attention before we leave the building, before we leave the floor, and pay some particular attention to the proposition, is this actually what we should be doing?

I do not mean tonight, Mr. Speaker. I think that the majority party, the Republican Party, and the House, have the opportunity to reconsider in the next day or two whether we want to go home, whether we need to go home bearing the burden of not having resolved the question of the debt limit.

Now, we have had arguments made, we can show headlines and present