

the meaning of clause 1 of rule IX. Rather, it proposes to effect a special order of business for the House—deeming it to have passed a legislative measure—as an antidote for the alleged discredit of previous inaction.

The resolution does not constitute a question of privilege under rule IX.

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I appeal the ruling of the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is, Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the House?

MOTION TO TABLE OFFERED BY MR. SOLOMON

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I move to table the appeal of the ruling of the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] to lay on the table the appeal of the ruling of the Chair.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 229, noes 187, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 26]

AYES—229

Allard	Deal	Horn
Archer	DeLay	Hostettler
Army	Diaz-Balart	Houghton
Bachus	Dickey	Hunter
Baker (CA)	Doolittle	Hutchinson
Baker (LA)	Dornan	Hyde
Ballenger	Dreier	Inglis
Barr	Duncan	Istook
Barrett (NE)	Dunn	Jacobs
Bartlett	Ehlers	Johnson (CT)
Barton	Ehrlich	Johnson, Sam
Bass	Emerson	Jones
Bateman	English	Kasich
Bereuter	Ensign	Kelly
Bilbray	Everett	Kim
Bilirakis	Ewing	King
Bliley	Fawell	Kingston
Blute	Fields (TX)	Klug
Boehlert	Flanagan	Knollenberg
Boehner	Foley	Kolbe
Bonilla	Forbes	LaHood
Bono	Fowler	Largent
Brownback	Fox	Latham
Bryant (TN)	Franks (CT)	LaTourette
Bunn	Franks (NJ)	Laughlin
Bunning	Frelinghuysen	Lazio
Burr	Frisa	Leach
Burton	Funderburk	Lewis (KY)
Buyer	Galleghy	Lightfoot
Callahan	Ganske	Linder
Calvert	Gekas	Livingston
Camp	Gilchrest	LoBiondo
Campbell	Gillmor	Longley
Canady	Gilman	Lucas
Castle	Goodlatte	Manzullo
Chabot	Goodling	Martini
Chambliss	Goss	McCollum
Chenoweth	Graham	McCrery
Christensen	Greenwood	McDade
Chrysler	Gunderson	McHugh
Clinger	Gutknecht	McInnis
Coble	Hancock	McIntosh
Coburn	Hansen	McKeon
Collins (GA)	Hastert	Metcalf
Combest	Hastings (WA)	Mica
Cooley	Hayworth	Miller (FL)
Cox	Hefley	Molinari
Crane	Heineman	Moorhead
Crapo	Hergert	Morella
Cremeans	Hilleary	Myers
Cubin	Hobson	Myrick
Cunningham	Hoekstra	Nethercutt
Davis	Hoke	Neumann

Ney	Sanford	Thomas
Norwood	Saxton	Thornberry
Nussle	Scarborough	Tiahrt
Oxley	Schaefer	Torkildsen
Parker	Schiff	Upton
Paxon	Sensenbrenner	Vucanovich
Petri	Shadegg	Waldholtz
Pombo	Shaw	Walker
Porter	Shays	Walsh
Portman	Shuster	Wamp
Pryce	Skeen	Watts (OK)
Quillen	Smith (MI)	Weldon (FL)
Quinn	Smith (NJ)	Weldon (PA)
Ramstad	Smith (TX)	Weller
Regula	Solomon	White
Riggs	Souder	Whitfield
Roberts	Spence	Wicker
Rogers	Stearns	Wolf
Rohrabacher	Stump	Young (AK)
Ros-Lehtinen	Talent	Young (FL)
Roth	Tate	Zeliff
Roukema	Tauzin	Zimmer
Royce	Taylor (MS)	
Salmon	Taylor (NC)	

NOES—187

Abercrombie	Gibbons	Olver
Ackerman	Gonzalez	Ortiz
Andrews	Gordon	Orton
Baessler	Gutierrez	Owens
Baldacci	Hall (OH)	Pallone
Barcia	Hall (TX)	Pastor
Barrett (WI)	Hamilton	Payne (NJ)
Beilenson	Harman	Payne (VA)
Bentsen	Hastings (FL)	Pelosi
Berman	Hefner	Peterson (FL)
Bevill	Hilliard	Peterson (MN)
Bishop	Hinche	Pickett
Bonior	Holden	Pomeroy
Borski	Hoyer	Poshard
Boucher	Jackson (IL)	Rahall
Brewster	Jackson-Lee	Rangel
Browder	(TX)	Reed
Brown (CA)	Jefferson	Richardson
Brown (FL)	Johnson, E. B.	Rivers
Brown (OH)	Johnson	Roemer
Cardin	Kanjorski	Roybal-Allard
Clay	Kaptur	Rush
Clayton	Kennedy (MA)	Sabo
Clement	Kennedy (RI)	Sawyer
Clyburn	Kennelly	Schroeder
Coleman	Kildee	Schumer
Collins (IL)	Klecza	Scott
Collins (MI)	Klink	Serrano
Condit	LaFalce	Sisisky
Conyers	Lantos	Skaggs
Costello	Levin	Skelton
Coyne	Lewis (GA)	Slaughter
Cramer	Lincoln	Spratt
Danner	Lipinski	Stark
de la Garza	Lofgren	Stenholm
DeFazio	Lowe	Stokes
DeLauro	Luther	Studds
Dellums	Maloney	Stupak
Deutsch	Markey	Tanner
Dicks	Martinez	Tejeda
Dingell	Mascara	Thompson
Dixon	Matsui	Thornton
Doggett	McCarthy	Thurman
Dooley	McDermott	Torres
Doyle	McHale	Torricelli
Durbin	McKinney	Towns
Edwards	McNulty	Traficant
Engel	Meehan	Velazquez
Eshoo	Meek	Vento
Evans	Menendez	Visclosky
Farr	Mfume	Volkmer
Fattah	Miller (CA)	Ward
Fazio	Minge	Waters
Fields (LA)	Mink	Watt (NC)
Flake	Moakley	Waxman
Foglietta	Mollohan	Williams
Ford	Montgomery	Wilson
Frank (MA)	Moran	Wise
Frost	Murtha	Woolsey
Furse	Nadler	Wyden
Gejdenson	Neal	Wynn
Gephardt	Oberstar	Yates
Geren	Obey	

NOT VOTING—17

Becerra	Johnson (SD)	Rose
Bryant (TX)	Lewis (CA)	Sanders
Chapman	Manton	Seastrand
Filner	Meyers	Smith (WA)
Green	Packard	Stockman
Hayes	Radanovich	

□ 1710

So the motion to lay on the table the appeal of the ruling of the Chair was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 354) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 354

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.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). This question is similar to questions previously raised, and, as indicated on page 321 of the manual, debate on questions of order is for the information of the Chair, and is thus within his discretion.

□ 1715

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to be heard on the privileged resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). The Chair will hear from the gentlewoman from Texas, and one other Member who would care to speak on the matter, and from two Members from the other side, if that should be the case, or whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman will state it.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would ask your indulgence. This question is a weighty question. Several Members have asked permission to speak on the privileged resolution because it is quite distinct from the previous one in that it asks that we not recess in order to work on this matter. I would ask the Speaker's indulgence on adding at least another Member to speak on each side. I would

appreciate the Speaker's indulgence on that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Inasmuch as a line has been pretty well determined because of the prior resolution, and the similarity of this resolution, it would be the hope of the Chair that he could limit discussion on the procedural question to the two Members per side.

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman will state it.

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, who made that determination that the debate on this privileged resolution would be limited?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is the Chair's discretion as indicated on page 321 of the manual.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE].

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, although appreciating the ruling, I disagree and believe that this is, in fact, singular and distinct.

Mr. Speaker, rule IX, section 1 in particular, speaks to questions of privilege affecting the rights of the House collectively, its safety, dignity, and the integrity of its proceedings.

But second, Mr. Speaker, it talks about affecting the rights, reputation and conduct of Members individually. And, therefore, we can see in that rule that there may be actions taken collectively by this body that would put this House in ill repute in the eyes of its constituents, in the eyes of other Members, and in the eyes collectively, of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I would affirm that recessing this House in light of the failure of the leader's privileged resolution to pass a clean debt ceiling will befall upon this House in the eyes of the American people a reputation that we would not be proud of. The House of Representatives will be held in disrepute by world leaders, international financial institutions, and most importantly the citizens of this country, if it does not pass a bill relating to the debt ceiling.

Mr. Speaker, it is my contention that this is a grave matter, and in many ways affects the dignity and integrity of these House proceedings. The Secretary of the Treasury has stated that the Federal Government will be in default of its financial obligations if the debt ceiling limit is not raised and a \$5.8 billion interest payment made very soon.

In accordance with the responsibilities of his office, Secretary Rubin has already sent a letter on January 22, 1996, to the congressional leadership stating under the current conditions the U.S. Treasury will no longer be able to fulfill all of its financial obligations.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, we have been on notice and we are on notice that actions by this body would put it in disrepute and have it viewed as not performing its responsibilities.

As we are aware, Mr. Speaker, the financial reputation of an organization is based solely upon the financial history it has established. Mr. Speaker, it has been an undeniable fact that this House was given 38 days of notice of the impending financial dilemma. If this body fails to pass a bill, which we have already done so by rejecting the leader's privileged resolution, then we would not be in good standing.

May I remind the Speaker that rule IX of the House states questions of privilege go to the dignity and reputation of this House.

Mr. Speaker, might I also say that, if on February 26, when we have the obligation of sending out to millions of Americans Social Security checks, I can tell my colleagues that if those checks go out with no clean debt ceiling, they will bounce. If that is not a blight on the integrity of this House, then I do not know what is.

Mr. Speaker, if I may personally say, having had the privilege of going to Bosnia, visiting with the people of those nations, Bosnia, the former Yugoslavia and Croatia, when making a very weighty decision by this body as to whether we would go in as peace-keeping troops in this effort, I had the privilege of talking to the men and women who are now serving in Bosnia. The only thing they asked of us is: Will the American people be with us?

Mr. Speaker, here we stand on the House floor about to recess and go home and jeopardize the opportunity and the responsibility to pay those military personnel by March 1. Mr. Speaker, I think that we have come to a point legitimately under rule IX that we must stand up because we provide a harm to the American people. That harm is the inability to pay Social Security; the inability to pay veterans' benefits; the inability to pay our military personnel; and, yes, the disrepute that will fall upon this House and this Nation when it is not able to pay its responsibilities and uphold the full faith and credit of this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that we not recess and we stand with the American people. Do not bring a lack of dignity on this House on the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the question of privilege?

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the question of privilege.

Mr. Speaker, here we go again. The folks who brought two Government shutdowns are now threatening to bring our Nation to the brink of default one more time. They are doing this in one more attempt to force their extreme agenda on the American people.

That is right, once again the Gingrich Republicans have the Nation teetering on the edge of crisis, and instead of working to avoid disaster, the Speaker and his gang want to leave town this weekend.

My colleagues heard me. They want to leave the Nation's full faith and

credit, as well as the fate of millions of Social Security and veterans' beneficiaries, hanging by a thread until Congress reconvenes 3 weeks from now.

Mr. SOLOMON. Regular order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind the gentlewoman to confine her remarks to the question of privilege.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, that is right. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask why the motion to adjourn is a privilege and the resolution to prevent adjournment is not a privilege. I would suggest that we be able to speak on either side of adjourning or not adjourning, equally. And I would hope that I could then have another Member of our caucus speak to this same issue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Has the gentlewoman completed her statement?

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask why, if the motion to adjourn is a privilege, that the motion not to adjourn is not the same privilege.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Are there other Members who wish to speak to the matter?

The gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] is recognized.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, it is not appropriate for me to refer to the next bill on Social Security that will come up, but I will advise my colleagues to look at it after we finish.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to argue briefly that the resolution does not constitute a question of the privileges of the House under rule IX.

As recently as 4:50 p.m. today, a few minutes ago, the Chair rules against a resolution purporting to raise a question of privilege, on the grounds that it effected a change in House rules by providing for passage of a specified bill.

The resolution before us is only a slight modification of the previous resolution, by requiring the Speaker to take action to keep the House in session until the House considers certain legislation. As such, the resolution attempts to change House rules by altering the duties of the Speaker as specified in House rule number I.

Presumably, the Speaker would even be required to not recognize anyone who offered a constitutionally privileged motion to adjourn. This is not only changing House rules, but it actually violates the Constitution of the United States. I would, therefore, urge the Chair to rule against the resolution in conformity with the Chair's previous rulings and House precedents, and I would urge the Speaker to rule.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. WALKER].

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, the resolution is obviously a resolution of the same nature as those that have been ruled on previously by Speakers extending back for several decades.

The cause being brought by the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] is under rule IX. This is obviously

not a question of privilege under the provisions of rule IX, and so, therefore, I request that the Chair rule against this matter as a question of privilege.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair is prepared to rule.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman will state it.

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, is it not true that there is probably a rule in the rule book for anything trying to obstruct what we are trying to do over here?

Mr. SOLOMON. Regular order. That is ridiculous.

Ms. MCKINNEY. Is that not true, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That is not a parliamentary inquiry.

The Chair is prepared to rule on this matter. The resolution offered by the gentlewoman from Texas alleges that the failure of the House to take a specified legislative action impairs its dignity and the integrity of its proceeding and lowers it in public esteem. On that premise, it resolves that the Speaker keep the House in session until it considers a pertinent legislative measure.

The resolution offered by the gentlewoman from Texas, like those offered on February 7, and December 22, 1995, and on January 3 and January 24, 1996, and earlier today, attempts to advance a legislative proposition as a question of the privileges of the House.

For the reasons just stated by the Chair when ruling that the resolution offered by the gentleman from Missouri did not constitute a question of privileges of the House, the Chair holds that the resolution offered by the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] does not affect the rights of the House collectively, its safety, dignity, or the integrity of its proceedings within the meaning of clause 1 of rule IX. Rather, it proposes to impose a particular legislative schedule on the House, precluding an adjournment of the House until a specified legislative measure is considered, as an antidote for the alleged disrepute of previous inaction.

Therefore, the resolution does not constitute a question of privilege under rule IX.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, because I believe that we should not recess but should work, I appeal the ruling of the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is: Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the House?

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I move to table the appeal of the ruling of the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] to lay on the table the appeal of the ruling of the Chair.

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. 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 229, nays 181, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 27]

YEAS—229

Allard	Frelinghuysen	Myrick
Archer	Frisa	Nethercutt
Armey	Funderburk	Neumann
Bachus	Galleghy	Ney
Baker (CA)	Ganske	Norwood
Ballenger	Gekas	Nussle
Barr	Gilchrist	Oxley
Barrett (NE)	Gillmor	Parker
Bartlett	Gilman	Paxon
Barton	Goodlatte	Petri
Bass	Goodling	Pombo
Bateman	Goss	Porter
Beilenson	Graham	Portman
Bereuter	Greenwood	Pryce
Bilbray	Gunderson	Quillen
Billrakis	Gutknecht	Quinn
Bliley	Hancock	Ramstad
Blute	Hansen	Regula
Boehlert	Hastert	Riggs
Boehner	Hastings (WA)	Roberts
Bonilla	Hayes	Rogers
Bono	Hayworth	Rohrabacher
Brownback	Hefley	Ros-Lehtinen
Bryant (TN)	Heineman	Roth
Bunn	Herger	Roukema
Bunning	Hilleary	Royce
Burr	Hoekstra	Salmon
Burton	Hoke	Sanford
Buyer	Horn	Saxton
Calvert	Hostettler	Scarborough
Camp	Houghton	Schaefer
Campbell	Hunter	Schiff
Canady	Hutchinson	Sensenbrenner
Castle	Hyde	Shadegg
Chabot	Inglis	Shaw
Chambliss	Istook	Shays
Chenoweth	Jacobs	Shuster
Christensen	Johnson (CT)	Skaggs
Chrysler	Johnson, Sam	Skeen
Clinger	Jones	Smith (MI)
Coble	Kelly	Smith (NJ)
Coburn	Kim	Smith (TX)
Collins (GA)	King	Smith (WA)
Combest	Kingston	Solomon
Cooley	Klug	Souder
Cox	Knollenberg	Stearns
Crane	LaHood	Stump
Crapo	Largent	Talent
Cremeans	Latham	Tate
Cubin	LaTourette	Tauzin
Cunningham	Laughlin	Taylor (MS)
Davis	Lazio	Taylor (NC)
Deal	Leach	Thomas
DeLay	Lewis (KY)	Thornberry
Diaz-Balart	Lightfoot	Tiahrt
Dickey	Linder	Torkildsen
Doolittle	Lipinski	Upton
Dornan	Livingston	Vucanovich
Dreier	LoBiondo	Waldholtz
Duncan	Longley	Walker
Dunn	Lucas	Walsh
Ehlers	Manzullo	Wamp
Ehrlich	Martini	Watts (OK)
Emerson	McCollum	Weldon (FL)
English	McCrery	Weldon (PA)
Ensign	McDade	Weller
Everett	McHugh	White
Ewing	McInnis	Whitfield
Fawell	McIntosh	Wicker
Fields (TX)	McKeon	Wilson
Flanagan	Metcalf	Wolf
Foley	Mica	Young (AK)
Forbes	Miller (FL)	Young (FL)
Fowler	Molinari	Zeliff
Fox	Moorhead	Zimmer
Franks (CT)	Morella	
Franks (NJ)	Myers	

NAYS—181

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

NOT VOTING—23

Baker (LA)	Hobson	Packard
Becerra	Johnson (SD)	Radanovich
Bryant (TX)	Kasich	Rose
Callahan	Klecicka	Sanders
Chapman	Kolbe	Seastrand
Condit	Lewis (CA)	Spence
Filner	Manton	Stockman
Green	Meyers	

□ 1746

So the motion to lay on the table the appeal of the ruling of the Chair was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I wish to raise a matter that involves a question of privileges of the House. Mr. Speaker, I affirm that the U.S. House of Representatives will be held in disrepute by world leaders, international financial institutions, and most importantly, the citizens of this country, if it does not pass a bill relating to the debt ceiling. It is my contention that this is a grave matter that in many ways affects the dignity and integrity of the House proceedings and I am more than able to prove this point unequivocally.

The Secretary of the Treasury has stated that the Federal Government will be in default of its financial obligations if the debt ceiling limit is not raised and a \$5.8 billion interest payment made very soon. In accordance with the responsibilities of his office, Secretary Rubin sent a letter on January 22, 1996, to the congressional leadership stating that under the current conditions, the U.S. Treasury will no longer be able to fulfill all of its financial obligations very soon.

Throughout our country's history, investors have relied upon the words "the full faith credit of the United States" to guarantee the financial stability of this country. As you are fully aware, the financial reputation of an organization is based solely upon the financial history it has established. Mr. Speaker, it is an undeniable fact that this House was given 38 days notice of the impending financial dilemma and if this body fails to consider a bill regarding the debt ceiling and the impending debt payment not made on time, then the standing of the House will indeed be harmed.

May I remind the Speaker that Rule IX of the House rules states that questions of privilege are those which affect the rights of the House collectively, its safety, dignity, and the integrity of its proceedings. As specified in the dictionary, the word dignity relates to "The quality or condition of being worthy," as well as "The respect and honor associated with an important position."

Hence, this body's decision not to address the debt limit problem will put into question, in the eyes of our creditors and our constituents, the reputation and fiscal integrity of this collective House. As evidence, it was announced last week by Moody's Investors Service that it is considering lowering the credit rating of the U.S. Treasury bonds for the first time in history. Under Rule IX of the House rules, this series of events and their repercussions would certainly cause our creditors, constituents, and international partners to hold this House responsible.

In addition to the irreparable damage that will be suffered, by the House, great harm will be done to millions of innocent American lives, young and old alike. The U.S. Government must make a \$30 million payment to Social Security or these beneficiaries, dependent upon their monthly stipend for food, heat, and medicine, will be left without funds to meet these basic necessities of life. Also, 2.2 million veterans with service-connected disabilities and 300,000 survivors of veterans may receive for the first time in history bad checks effectively written by every Member of the House.

Mr. Speaker, there is significant concern by many economists that our economy is headed for a recession, and any default caused by our inaction will certainly drive us to it. The default of this Government will create uncertainty and anxiety in the financial, business, and consumer markets; as a result, investments will slow, capitol spending will wither, and consumer confidence will die. The reactions will only exacerbate any recession tendencies within the economy, propelling the United States into an economic dive, no one wishes. Taken together with the additional effects already mentioned, it is plainly evident that this crisis affects the very financial underpinning of our country.

The American people will be severely affected by any inability of this body to bring

forth legislation to increase the debt ceiling. I contend that as a result, they will hold us, collectively and individually, responsible for their needless suffering and trauma. If that occurs, the reputation and conduct of each of us, in our representative capacity, will be called into question. Under rule IX, this too would be sufficient justification for my privileged resolution.

Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin has nearly exhausted all other measures to avoid a Government default. This resolution must be considered privileged because the reputation of the House is at stake. American citizens are tired of the partisan wrangling that has echoed through these halls. They want the Government to fulfill its responsibilities and meet its obligations, just as they must. With complete certainty, the U.S. House of Representatives will be held responsible and the integrity of everything that we do here will be questioned for our failure to consider a bill relating to the debt ceiling.

The House has voted to rise or extend the debt limit 33 times over the last 15 years to keep intact the good will, dignity and reputation of the U.S. Government and more specifically, this House; I do not see why we should now shirk the obligations we accepted upon our oath of office. We should not recess at this time, when America needs us to work to avoid a default on our debt.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution not to adjourn until a debt limit extension has been approved—and yet I believe the resolution does not go far enough. I regret that we are even having to consider a debt limit extension—rather than a balanced budget proposal or, at the very least, the remaining appropriations bills that should have been approved 4 months ago. I regret that this Congress plans to adjourn for a 3-week break when we have so much work left to do.

Mr. Speaker, we should not go home until all the appropriations bills have been passed and approved by the President. We should not go home until this Congress produces a balanced budget proposal that can be supported by both parties and by the President. A majority of Americans want a balanced budget—a budget that makes the most use of their tax dollars and a budget that also is kind and fair to our seniors, our children, and our less fortunate citizens.

Throughout the past year, Congress has had a golden opportunity to streamline Government, enact some needed reforms, and produce a balanced budget. But the shifting sands of time and politics have eroded that opportunity, and we are losing ground fast.

Let us not let another opportunity pass to discharge our responsibility to our fellow citizens. Let's stay and work until we've accomplished our Nation's important business.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2924, THE SOCIAL SECURITY GUARANTEE ACT

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 355 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 355

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in

the House the bill (H.R. 2924) to guarantee the timely payment of social security benefits in March 1996. The bill shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit. The motion to recommit may include instructions only if offered by the Minority Leader or his designee.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 1 hour.

(Mr. GOSS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks and to include extraneous material for the RECORD.)

Mr. GOSS. 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 given is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, this is a straightforward, fair rule that allows for consideration of H.R. 2924, a bill to ensure that Social Security payments will not be needlessly delayed by the administration. Let me repeat that, Mr. Speaker. This is a bill to ensure that Social Security payments will not be needlessly delayed by the administration. In other words, the checks are going to go out, they are going to go out on time, they are going to be paid in full.

Mr. Speaker, because this legislation involves a matter of simple fairness, and due to the predicted impending winter storm, we are bringing it up under the expedited authority granted earlier by this House. The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate, and preserves the right of the minority to offer a motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, we should not really have to be working on this matter at all. Despite the fact that this Congress will pass a responsible debt limit increase prior to the March 1 deadline, and despite the fact that the President has already vetoed two debt limit increases, the administration has suddenly called into question its ability to pay for the March Social Security benefits. President Clinton made suggestive remarks along these lines at State of the Union. Well Mr. Speaker, passage of H.R. 2924 will make absolutely clear that the Secretary of the Treasury has the authority to process and send these Social Security benefit checks—which are printed in late February. I find it appalling that the sanctity of the Social Security System should be brought into question in such a cynical manner. Yet we have listened to the President and some in this body employ similar scare tactics for: School lunches, Meals on Wheels, Medicare, and so on. Each time they resort to these threats, I think their credibility drops, and certainly the President's ability to work in good faith with the majority of this Congress diminishes.