

years of fighting—without worrying about filing their tax forms on time. We will signal how much we value the extraordinary service of American troops by exempting Operation Joint Endeavor pay from taxation. The bill also will make it easier for families to stay in touch during a time of separation by waiving the excise tax for troops to call home from Bosnia.

This bill corrects a technicality, but one that I believe is extremely important. Troops in combat zones have traditionally received tax breaks, but American forces in Bosnia are there not to fight a war, but to keep the peace. I urge my colleagues to pass this bill and show our troops in Bosnia that we understand their sacrifice and value their service.

Mr. TATE. Mr. Speaker, while I do not believe the President ever made the case to the American people and Congress that sending United States ground troops to Bosnia is clearly within our vital national security interests, I cannot express how profoundly proud and deeply appreciative I am of the men and women that once again have been called upon to serve our great Nation.

The men and women of our military risk their lives every day in Bosnia. I believe if our Government can do anything to help our soldiers and their families during these difficult times, it is our obligation to do so. That is why I am so disappointed that the President has not extended combat zone tax benefits to troops serving in Bosnia. In the past, these benefits have been automatic.

As a Member of the 104th Congress, I am proud this body has chosen to step up to the plate and show how profoundly grateful we are for those troops serving at the request of the President. Today, we will pass a measure to provide tax relief to our troops serving in Operation Joint Endeavor. This will include eliminating taxation of combat pay, reducing estate taxes in the event of combat-related death, and forgiving income tax upon a combat-related death.

This tax relief cannot fully compensate members of the military for their service, but if it helps one family or service member through this trying ordeal, then it will have been worth it.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of H.R. 2778. This important legislation would ensure that American soldiers now serving in the former Yugoslavia receive the same tax benefits as other soldiers in combat zones.

Our troops serving in Operation Joint Endeavor face special dangers and challenges unique to their mission, including mine clearance and monitoring the withdrawal and redeployment of armed groups. Though they are not serving in conventional combat conditions, their work is no less dangerous. Clearly, they should not be treated any differently than other American soldiers who serve overseas in an area of potential danger.

Unfortunately, without this bill, our troops in Bosnia would not get the same tax benefits as soldiers serving in a combat zone. This legislation will correct this discrepancy and ensure that the young American men and women enforcing the Dayton Peace Accords in the former Yugoslavia are treated the same as soldiers serving in equally hazardous areas.

I am glad to see Congress take action on this issue, and I urge the prompt passage of the legislation to correct this oversight.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROGERS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky [Mr. BUNNING] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2778, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. BUNNING of Kentucky. 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. Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

MOST-FAVORED-NATION TREATMENT FOR BULGARIA

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2853) to authorize the extension of nondiscriminatory treatment—most-favored-nation treatment—to the products of Bulgaria.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2853

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS AND SUPPLEMENTAL ACTION.

(a) CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that Bulgaria—

(1) has received most-favored-nation treatment since 1991 and has been found to be in full compliance with the freedom of emigration requirements under title IV of the Trade Act of 1974 since 1993;

(2) has reversed many years of Communist dictatorship and instituted a constitutional republic ruled by a democratically elected government as well as basic market-oriented reforms, including privatization;

(3) is in the process of acceding to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), and extension of unconditional most-favored-nation treatment would enable the United States to avail itself of all rights under the GATT and the WTO with respect to Bulgaria; and

(4) has demonstrated a strong desire to build friendly relationships and to cooperate fully with the United States on trade matters.

(b) SUPPLEMENTAL ACTION.—The Congress notes that the United States Trade Representative intends to negotiate with Bulgaria in order to preserve the commitments of that country under the bilateral commercial agreement in effect between that country and the United States that are consistent with the GATT and the WTO.

SEC. 2. TERMINATION OF APPLICATION OF TITLE IV OF THE TRADE ACT OF 1974 TO BULGARIA.

(a) PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATIONS AND EXTENSION OF NONDISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT.—Notwithstanding any provision of title IV of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2431 et seq.), the President may—

(1) determine that such title should no longer apply to Bulgaria; and

(2) after making a determination under paragraph (1) with respect to Bulgaria, proclaim the extension of nondiscriminatory treatment (most-favored-nation treatment) to the products of that country.

(b) TERMINATION OF APPLICATION OF TITLE IV.—On and after the effective date of the extension under subsection (a)(2) of nondiscriminatory treatment to the products of Bulgaria, title IV of the Trade Act of 1974 shall cease to apply to that country.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. CRANE] will be recognized for 20 minutes, and the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GIBBONS] will be recognized for 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. CRANE].

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2853.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2853, which would extend permanent most-favored-nation [MFN] tariff treatment to the products of Bulgaria. This legislation, which was introduced by myself and the ranking member of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade, Mr. RANGEL, is non-controversial and is identical to legislation that the House passed last year, H.R. 1643, by a voice vote. The House needs to take action on this important legislation again because the provisions on Bulgaria were not contained in the version of H.R. 1643 that was ultimately enacted.

The reasons for the normalization of trade relations between the United States and Bulgaria through the passage of H.R. 2853 remain the same as they were at the time of the House's consideration of this issue last year. At present, Bulgaria's MFN status is regulated by title IV of the Trade Act of 1974, which is commonly referred to as the Jackson-Vanik amendment. Since 1993, Bulgaria has received MFN status after the President has found the country to be in full compliance with the freedom of emigration requirements contained in this provision of United States law.

The political and economic circumstances in Bulgaria have changed considerably since the enactment of the Jackson-Vanik amendment, which was intended to address United States trade relations with nonmarket economies. In recent years, the Communist dictatorship in Bulgaria has collapsed and a democratically elected government has taken office which has implemented basic market-oriented principles, including privatization. Normalizing United States trade relations with Bulgaria, as has been done for

other East European countries, will enhance our bilateral relations with the country. Moreover, it will foster the economic development of Eastern Europe by providing the business community with greater certainty with respect to Bulgaria's status under United States law.

At present, Bulgaria is also in the final stages of its negotiations to become a member of the World Trade Organization [WTO]. In this process, Bulgaria has presented a market access offer that would further open the Bulgarian economy to United States exports. For this reason, passage of H.R. 2853 is important in order for the United States to avail itself of all WTO rights in our trade relations with Bulgaria at the time of the country's accession to the agreement.

The Congressional Budget Office has indicated that its baseline revenue projections assume that Bulgaria's conditional MFN status will be renewed by the President in the future. Therefore, enactment of H.R. 2853 will not affect projected Federal Government receipts.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the passage of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. CRANE] has adequately explained this bill. I will not belabor the time. I had planned to do a little filibustering here, because I was waiting for the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HYDE] to reach the floor, but he is already here, so I will not do the filibuster.

I was going to point out at great length the strides Bulgaria has made since it has become a free nation. It has joined the family of nations very well, conducted itself as well as we can really expect, considering the tortuous history that this country has gone through.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend all the people in Bulgaria for what they have done. I do not think it is widely known here in the Congress or widely known throughout the world, but Bulgaria has modernized its revenue collection system, and has adopted a very comprehensive value-added tax. Now, that is something that we are going to hear more about in our future around here, but the gentleman from Illinois is here, and I urge the adoption of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, before we conclude this exchange on this important piece of legislation, I want to take this opportunity briefly to pay tribute to the former chairman of our Committee on Ways and Means and the man under whom I served when he was chairman of the Subcommittee on Trade. I refer, of course, to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GIBBONS].

Mr. Speaker, I have often mentioned to folks that it was the Democratic party traditionally that embraced free trade, and it was the Republicans that tried to put the Great Wall of China around this country. In the post World War II era, our positions tended to shift somewhat, but not totally. It was, in fact, McKinley, a Republican, who imposed what at that point was the highest tariff in our history in 1890. That brought on the panic of 1893.

Grover Cleveland was reelected in 1892, and he got the tariffs lowered and he restored a stable economy again. He said in a State of the Union message at that time, when you put those walls around your country, you inflict the greatest injury on that man who earns his daily bread with the sweat of his brow. That was a profound truth that he uttered. But I have mentioned to many people that the gentleman from Florida, SAM GIBBONS, is our Grover Cleveland, and he has faithfully stood on behalf of those free market principles, and has tried to advance them, and we have worked amicably on a bipartisan basis on all of these issues. His announcement of his retirement I deeply regret. He will be profoundly missed. I salute you, SAM, and thank you for your guidance.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member rises in support of H.R. 2853, which would extend nondiscriminatory most-favored-nation treatment—normal tariff status—to the export products of Bulgaria. This Member commends his colleagues from the Ways and Means Committee, especially the chairman of the committee, the distinguished gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARCHER], for bringing this legislation to the House floor. This Member would also commend the ranking minority member, the distinguished gentleman from Florida [Mr. GIBBONS], who has recently announced his retirement and who will be sorely missed by this Member and all Members of this body.

He is among the first Members of Congress who took a deep interest in the nations of Eastern and Central Europe even before these countries emerged from behind the Iron Curtain. This Member first visited Bulgaria in the early 1980's as part of a Gibbons-led trade delegation. His good counsel and knowledge about these countries has helped us facilitate our relations with those emerging democracies and active trading partners.

Finally, this Member congratulates the chairman of the Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee, Mr. CRANE, and the ranking minority member, Mr. RANGEL, for their leadership on this important legislation. Their effort is appreciated by this Member.

There are four major reasons that Bulgaria has earned most-favored-nation status. First, Bulgaria has received MFN treatment since 1991 through the waiver process, and has been found to be in compliance with the freedom of emigration requirements of the Trade Act of 1974. Second, Bulgaria has reversed many years of Communist dictatorship and has instituted a constitutional republic, a democratically elected government and basic market-oriented reforms. The Bulgarian people enjoyed their first direct Presidential elections in 1992. Third, Bulgaria is in the process of acceding to the World Trade Organization

[WTO] and extension of unconditional MFN would enable the United States to avail itself of all rights under the WTO with respect to Bulgaria. Fourth, finally, Bulgaria has demonstrated a strong desire to build friendly relations with the United States and to cooperate fully with us on trade matters.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, this Member reiterates his strong support for H.R. 2853 and urges his colleagues to join in this support.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2853, a bill extending most-favored-nation trade status to Bulgaria.

Bulgaria emerged from Communist dictatorship in November 1989, when Communist leader Todor Zhivkov was removed from power and the path was laid for the free elections that were later held in June 1990.

Just as the other Eastern European countries that emerged from Communist dictatorship after 1989, Bulgaria has faced considerable challenges in transforming its economy and building a new foreign policy focused on integrating Bulgaria into European and trans-Atlantic institutions.

Unfortunately, Bulgaria and the problems it faces have not often received sufficient attention from the international community.

In fact, given the pressing problems elsewhere in the region—particularly the conflicts in the nearby states of the former Yugoslavia—many have preferred to see Bulgaria as simply an oasis of stability in the otherwise turbulent Balkans, overlooking the fact that Bulgaria's economy has suffered from more than just the problems associated with transforming a Communist economy to one based on a market mechanism.

The reality is that, in the last few years, Bulgaria's economy has been adversely affected by its observance of economic sanctions placed on two of its traditional trading partners by the international community.

Since the early part of this decade, sanctions on Serbia and Iraq have resulted in considerable commercial losses for Bulgaria—losses Bulgaria has accepted as a member of the international community, but losses nonetheless.

The United States has tried to assist Bulgaria in this difficult time with direct aid for political and economic reform and as a member of the G-24 group of nations coordinating aid for that country.

It is now time, however, for us to try to do a little more to help Bulgaria and its people as they work to transform their economy and join in a new, modern, prosperous, and democratic Europe.

I hope my colleagues will join in supporting this measure, which should help Bulgaria by providing it with most favored nation—or MFN—trade status for its exports to the United States.

Let us today voice our support for those positive steps that Bulgaria has taken since emerging from communism just a few short years ago, and urge it forward toward a prosperous and democratic future.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky [Mr. BUNNING] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2853.

The question was taken.

Mr. BUNNING of Kentucky. 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. Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

□ 1145

NATIONAL GAMBLING IMPACT AND POLICY COMMISSION ACT

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 497) to create the National Gambling Impact and Policy Commission, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 497

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "National Gambling Impact and Policy Commission Act".

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.

There is established a commission to be known as the National Gambling Impact and Policy Commission (in this Act referred to as the "Commission").

SEC. 3. MEMBERSHIP.

(a) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—

(1) GENERALLY.—The Commission shall be composed of 9 members, appointed from persons specially qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of the Commission, as follows:

(A) three appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(B) three appointed by the majority leader of the Senate; and

(C) three appointed by the President of the United States.

(2) CONSULTATION BEFORE APPOINTMENT.—Before the appointment of members of the Commission (including to any vacancies), the appointing authorities shall consult with each other to assure that the overall membership of the Commission reflects a fair and equitable representation of various points of view.

(3) TIMING OF APPOINTMENTS.—The appointing authorities shall make their appointments to the Commission not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) DESIGNATION OF THE CHAIRMAN.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and majority leader of the Senate shall designate a Chairman and Vice Chairman from among the members of the Commission.

(c) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT; VACANCIES.—Members shall be appointed for the life of the Commission. Any vacancy in the Commission shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(d) INITIAL MEETING.—No later than 60 days after the date on which all members of the Commission have been appointed, the Commission shall hold its first meeting.

(e) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the call of the Chairman.

(f) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number of members may hold hearings.

SEC. 4. DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—It shall be the duty of the Commission to conduct a comprehensive legal and factual study of—

(A) gambling in the United States, including State-sponsored lotteries, casino gambling, pari-mutuel betting, and sports betting; and

(B) existing Federal, State, and local policy and practices with respect to the legalization or prohibition of gambling activities and to formulate and propose such changes in those policies and practices as the Commission shall deem appropriate.

(2) MATTERS STUDIED.—The matters studied by the Commission shall include—

(A) the economic impact of gambling on the United States, States, political subdivisions of States, and Indian tribes, both in its positive and negative aspects;

(B) the economic impact of gambling on other businesses;

(C) an assessment and review of political contributions and their influence on the development of public policy regulating gambling;

(D) an assessment of the relationship between gambling and crime;

(E) an assessment of the impact of pathological, or problem gambling on individuals, families, social institutions, criminal activity and the economy;

(F) a review of the demographics of gamblers;

(G) a review of the effectiveness of existing practices in law enforcement, judicial administration, and corrections to combat and deter illegal gambling and illegal activities related to gambling;

(H) a review of the costs and effectiveness of State, Federal, and Tribal gambling regulatory policy;

(I) an assessment of the effects of advertising concerning gambling, including—

(i) whether advertising has increased participation in gambling activity;

(ii) the effects of various types of advertising, including the sponsorship of sporting events;

(iii) the relationship between advertising and the amount of the prize to be awarded; and

(iv) an examination of State lottery advertising practices, including the process by which States award lottery advertising contracts;

(J) a review of gambling that uses interactive technology, including the Internet;

(K) a review of the extent to which casino gambling provides economic opportunity to residents of economically depressed regions and to Indian tribes;

(L) a review of the effect of revenues derived from State-sponsored gambling on State budgets; and

(M) such other relevant issues and topics as considered appropriate by the Chairman of the Commission.

(b) REPORT.—No later than 2 years after the Commission first meets, the Commission shall submit a report to the President and the Congress which shall contain a detailed statement of the findings and conclusions of the Commission, together with its recommendations for such legislation and administrative actions as it considers appropriate.

SEC. 5. POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) HEARINGS AND SUBPOENAS.—

(1) The Commission may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, administer such oaths, take such testimony, receive such evidence, and require by subpoena the attendance and testimony of such witnesses and the production of such materials as the Commission considers advisable to carry out the purposes of this Act.

(2) ATTENDANCE OF WITNESSES.—The attendance of witnesses and the production of evidence may be required from any place within the United States.

(3) FAILURE TO OBEY A SUBPOENA.—If a person refuses to obey a subpoena issued under paragraph (1), the Commission may apply to a United States district court for an order requiring that person to appear before the Commission to give testimony, produce evidence, or both, relating to the matter under investigation. The application may be made within the judicial district where the hearing is conducted or where that person is found, resides, or transacts business. Any failure to obey the order of the court may be punished by the court as civil contempt.

(4) SERVICE OF SUBPOENAS.—The subpoenas of the Commission shall be served in the manner provided for subpoenas issued by a United States district court under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure for the United States district courts.

(5) SERVICE OF PROCESS.—All process of any court to which application is to be made under paragraph (3) may be served in the judicial district in which the person required to be served resides or may be found.

(b) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The Commission may secure directly from any Federal department or agency such information as the Commission considers necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act. Upon request of the Chairman of the Commission, the head of such department or agency may furnish such information to the Commission.

(c) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the Commission without reimbursement, and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

SEC. 6. COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.

(a) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—Subject to the limitation provided in subsection (e), each member of the Commission who is not an officer or employee of the Federal Government shall be compensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which such member is engaged in the performance of the duties of the Commission. All members of the Commission who are officers or employees of the United States shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for their services as officers or employees of the United States.

(b) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Subject to the limitation provided in subsection (e), the members of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Commission.

(c) STAFF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chairman of the Commission may, without regard to the civil service laws and regulations, appoint and terminate an executive director and such other additional personnel as may be necessary to enable the Commission to perform its duties. The employment of an executive director shall be subject to confirmation by the Commission.

(2) COMPENSATION.—Subject to the requirements of subsection (e), the executive director shall be compensated at the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of title 5, United States Code. The Chairman of the Commission may fix the compensation of other personnel without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for such personnel