

often stated should be available to all Americans.

The concern is that with this merger, indeed, will Time Warner-Turner make available under the program access guidelines that this Congress has spoken to in several acts now, the cable bill of 1992, and the most recent telecommunications bill of 1996, will in fact those programs be made available to small cable companies in those rural areas.

The concern is one that has been expressed in a letter to Chairman Pitofsky authorized by the SCBA, the organization representing those small cable companies. It is expressed in a letter to the chairman issued by the Small Business Administration, dated August 14, 1996, in which the Small Business Administration points out the fact that Time Warner's Prime Star, the direct broadcast satellite television system, will be in direct competition with those small cable companies in rural areas, and the SBA has raised the question of whether or not this new combination will in fact act in a way that is in fact anticompetitive and will not make programming available to those small cable companies that face competition from Prime Star, which is, indeed, owned by this new proposed merger.

The concern has also been expressed on the Senate side in a letter that Senator EXON sent to the chairman in which he pointed out that the success of competition in video services depends upon program access, that if any system, be it a small cable company or a satellite company, cannot get the program, that consumers are denied competitive choices.

We have fought this battle on the floor of the House in 1992 and successfully restated, over a Presidential veto, the intention that program access is the foundation of competition in this area. We again expressed it in the 1996 Telecommunications Act, where program access is the foundation to competition and to consumer choice.

I simply wanted to raise that concern here today with the FTC, and to hopefully continue dialoguing on this topic. When consumers have choice, when they have program access, to choose from two different suppliers, prices, services, competition, all of those things work to the benefit of the marketplace. When consumers are denied choice because some providers cannot buy the programs, then competition does not work, consumers suffer from higher prices and less quality service.

It is critical, and I hope the FTC pays attention to this notion in approving the Time Warner-Turner merger, that that program access be maintained so consumers in rural areas serviced by small cable companies will continue to have the same kind of choices that other Americans have to choose between a satellite distributor or a landline cable company for the incredibly desirable cable programming that is now important to the American consumer's menu.

With those concerns expressed, I hope we will continue this dialog. I thank the chairman of the subcommittee for the time to express those concerns, and hope that in fact the FTC will listen and continue to talk to us about them.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my friend, the gentleman from Louisiana, for his hard work on the program access issue. As many know, that was a very hotly debated issue back in 1992 during the cable reregulation legislation, and one of the provisions that made the most sense in an otherwise rather flawed bill. Clearly, that issue is incredibly important to our rural constituents as well. I commend him for his consistent work on this for a number of years.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I commend Chairman OXLEY and his staff for working in an open, bipartisan manner on this legislation. I also want to commend our ranking member on the subcommittee, Mr. MANTON, for his leadership on this and many other important legislative issues.

The Federal Trade Commission is one of our most important independent agencies. Its core statutory duties are twofold: To prevent antitrust violations and to protect consumers from deceptive and unfair commercial practices. Its mission is vital to protecting the public interest.

During the 103d Congress, our committee worked in a bipartisan fashion to enact two important laws involving the FTC. First, we enacted a compromise bill that broke the 14-year-old stalemate on FTC authorizing legislation. The bill provided a reasonable statutory framework, based on previous Commission policy statements, for determining whether acts or practices are unfair. The bill also beefed up the Commission's enforcement authorities in several important respects. Since enactment of this landmark legislation, the Commission has been able to choose among a broad spectrum of enforcement options against those who violate the FTC Act or Commission rules.

Second, the 103d Congress enacted a telemarketing bill that provides new tools for the FTC and State law enforcement agencies to crack down on those who use a telephone to cheat, swindle, and defraud consumers. The FTC, working closely with State attorneys general, consumer organizations, and other interested parties, has successfully prosecuted multiple telemarketing fraud cases since enactment of the 1993 legislation. The regulations promulgated by the Commission early this year provide additional protection for consumers in this important area.

The record clearly indicates the FTC is performing its mission with improved efficiency and effectiveness. Through efforts initiated during Janet Steiger's tenure as Chairman and continued under Chairman Pitofsky's leadership, the FTC has embarked on a program of responsible regulatory reform. It has repealed unnecessary regulations and updated other regulations where appropriate. Those who advocate responsible regulatory reform would be well advised to look at the FTC's method of

streamlining and improving regulation. The FTC's efforts contrast sharply with the ill-advised, blunderbuss approach taken in several legislative initiatives Republicans have pursued during this Congress.

The agency also is doing more with less. Although it has roughly half the staff it had in 1980, it continues to perform its core statutory duties effectively. But, as former Chairman Janet Steiger said in her testimony before the subcommittee,

Any further significant decline in the FTC's staffing imperils the performance of its main mission.

The modest funding levels in the Oxley-Manton bill are well justified when considering the revenues returned to the Treasury from FTC merger fees and enforcement actions and the benefits the agency produces for consumers and the economy.

I am pleased that the Commerce Committee chose to authorize the FTC on a bipartisan basis and to ignore hastily drafted provisions in the House budget resolution that recommended the elimination of the agency. I also note that an identical authorization bill has been reported by our sister committee and is pending in the other body.

I commend Chairman OXLEY and Mr. MANTON. Their bipartisan leadership during the last Congress was critical to enactment of the first FTC authorization bill in more than a decade. The bill before us builds on that progress. I urge all Members to support this legislation.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OXLEY. 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. 3553.

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

There was no objection.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WICKER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. OXLEY] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3553.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROPANE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH ACT OF 1996

Mr. SCHAEFER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1514) to authorize and facilitate a program to enhance safety, training, research and development, and safety education in the propane gas industry for the benefit of propane consumers and the public, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1514

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 "Propane Education and Research Act of 1996".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) propane gas, or liquefied petroleum gas, is an essential energy commodity providing heat, hot water, cooking fuel, and motor fuel among its many uses to millions of Americans;

(2) the use of propane is especially important to rural citizens and farmers, offering an efficient and economical source of gas energy;

(3) propane has been recognized as a clean fuel and can contribute in many ways to reducing the pollution in our cities and towns; and

(4) propane is primarily domestically produced and its use provides energy security and jobs for Americans.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

For the purposes of this Act—

(1) the term "Council" means a Propane Education and Research Council created pursuant to section 4 of this Act;

(2) the term "industry" means those persons involved in the production, transportation, and sale of propane, and in the manufacture and distribution of propane utilization equipment, in the United States;

(3) the term "industry trade association" means an organization exempt from tax, under section 501(c) (3) or (6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, representing the propane industry;

(4) the term "odorized propane" means propane which has had odorant added to it;

(5) the term "producer" means the owner of propane at the time it is recovered at a gas processing plant or refinery;

(6) the term "propane" means a hydrocarbon whose chemical composition is predominantly C_3H_8 , whether recovered from natural gas or crude oil, and includes liquefied petroleum gases and mixtures thereof;

(7) the term "public member" means a member of the Council, other than a representative of producers or retail marketers, representing significant users of propane, public safety officials, academia, the propane research community, or other groups knowledgeable about propane;

(8) the term "qualified industry organization" means the National Propane Gas Association, the Gas Processors Association, a successor association of such associations, or a group of retail marketers or producers who collectively represent at least 25 percent of the volume of propane sold or produced in the United States;

(9) the term "retail marketer" means a person engaged primarily in the sale of odorized propane to the ultimate consumer or to retail propane dispensers;

(10) the term "retail propane dispenser" means a person who sells odorized propane to the ultimate consumer but is not engaged primarily in the business of such sales; and

(11) the term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Energy.

SEC. 4. REFERENDA.

(a) **CREATION OF PROGRAM.**—The qualified industry organizations may conduct, at their own expense, a referendum among producers and retail marketers for the creation of a Propane Education and Research Council. The Council, if established, shall reimburse the qualified industry organizations for the cost of the referendum accounting and documentation. Such referendum shall be conducted by an independent auditing firm agreed to by the qualified industry organizations. Voting rights in such referendum shall be based on the volume of propane produced or odorized propane sold in the previous calendar year or other representative period. Upon approval of those persons representing two-thirds of the total volume of propane voted in the retail marketer class and two-thirds of all propane voted in the producer class, the Council shall be established, and shall be authorized to levy an assessment on odorized propane in accordance with section 6. All persons voting in the referendum shall certify to the independent auditing firm the volume of propane represented by their vote.

(b) **TERMINATION.**—On the Council's own initiative, or on petition to the Council by producers and retail marketers representing 35 percent of the volume of propane in each class, the Council shall, at its own expense, hold a referendum, to be conducted by an independent auditing firm selected by the Council, to determine whether the industry favors termination or suspension of the Council. Termination or suspension shall not take effect unless it is approved by persons representing more than one-half of the total volume of odorized propane in the retail marketer class and more than one-half of the total volume of propane in the producer class, or is approved by persons representing more than two-thirds of the total volume of propane in either such class.

SEC. 5. PROPANE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH COUNCIL.

(a) **SELECTION OF MEMBERS.**—The qualified industry organizations shall select all retail marketer, public, and producer members of the Council. The producer organizations shall select the producer members of the Council, the retail marketer organizations shall select retail marketer members, and all qualified industry organizations shall jointly select the public members. Vacancies in unfinished terms of Council members shall be filled in the same manner as were the original appointments.

(b) **REPRESENTATION.**—In selecting members of the Council, the qualified industry organizations shall give due regard to selecting a Council that is representative of the industry, including representation of—

(1) gas processors and oil refiners among producers;

(2) interstate and intrastate operators among retail marketers;

(3) large and small companies among producers and retail marketers, including agricultural cooperatives; and

(4) diverse geographic regions of the country.

(c) **MEMBERSHIP.**—The Council shall consist of 21 members, with 9 members representing retail marketers, 9 members representing producers, and 3 public members. Other than the public members, Council members shall be full-time employees or owners of businesses in the industry or representatives of agricultural cooperatives. No employee of a qualified industry organization or other industry trade association shall serve as a member of the Council, and no member of the Council may serve concurrently as an officer of the Board of Directors of a qualified industry organization or other industry trade association. Only one person at a time from any company or its affiliate may serve on the Council.

(d) **COMPENSATION.**—Council members shall receive no compensation for their services, nor shall Council members be reimbursed for expenses relating to their service, except that public members, upon request, may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses directly related to their participation in Council meetings.

(e) **TERMS.**—Council members shall serve terms of 3 years and may serve not more than 2 full consecutive terms. Members filling unexpired terms may serve not more than a total of 7 consecutive years. Former members of the Council may be returned to the Council if they have not been members for a period of 2 years. Initial appointments to the Council shall be for terms of 1, 2, and 3 years, staggered to provide for the selection of 7 members each year.

(f) **FUNCTIONS.**—The Council shall develop programs and projects and enter into contracts or agreements for implementing this Act, including programs to enhance consumer and employee safety and training, to provide for research and development of clean and efficient propane utilization equipment, to inform and educate the public about safety and other issues associated with the use of propane, and to provide for the payment of the costs thereof with funds collected pursuant to this Act. The Council shall coordinate its activities with industry

trade association and others as appropriate to provide efficient delivery of services and to avoid unnecessary duplication of activities.

(g) **USE OF FUNDS.**—Not less than 5 percent of the funds collected through assessments pursuant to this Act shall be used for programs and projects intended to benefit the agriculture industry in the United States. The Council shall coordinate its activities in this regard with agriculture industry trade associations and other organizations representing the agriculture industry. The percentage of funds collected through assessments pursuant to this Act to be used for projects relating to the use of propane as an over-the-road motor fuel shall not exceed the percentage of the total market for odorized propane that is used as a motor vehicle fuel, based on the historical average of such use over the previous 3-year period.

(h) **PRIORITIES.**—Issues related to research and development, safety, education, and training shall be given priority by the Council in the development of its programs and projects.

(i) **ADMINISTRATION.**—The Council shall select from among its members a Chairman and other officers as necessary, may establish committees and subcommittees of the Council, and shall adopt rules and bylaws for the conduct of business and the implementation of this Act. The Council shall establish procedures for the solicitation of industry comment and recommendations on any significant plans, programs, and projects to be funded by the Council. The Council may establish advisory committees of persons other than Council members.

(j) **ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.**—(1) The administrative expenses of operating the Council (not including costs incurred in the collection of the assessment pursuant to section 7) plus amounts paid under paragraph (2) shall not exceed 10 percent of the funds collected in any fiscal year.

(2) The Council shall annually reimburse the Secretary for costs incurred by the Federal Government relating to the Council, except that such reimbursement for any fiscal year shall not exceed the amount that the Secretary determines is the average annual salary of two employees of the Department of Energy.

(k) **BUDGET.**—Before August 1 each year, the Council shall publish for public review and comment a budget plan for the next calendar year, including the probable costs of all programs, projects, and contracts and a recommended rate of assessment sufficient to cover such costs. Following this review and comment, the Council shall submit the proposed budget to the Secretary and to the Congress. The Secretary may recommend programs and activities the Secretary considers appropriate.

(l) **RECORDS; AUDITS.**—The Council shall keep minutes, books, and records that clearly reflect all of the acts and transactions of the Council and make public such information. The books of the Council shall be audited by a certified public accountant at least once each fiscal year and at such other times as the Council may designate. Copies of such audit shall be provided to all members of the Council, all qualified industry organizations, and to other members of the industry upon request. The Secretary shall receive notice of meetings and may require reports on the activities of the Council, as well as reports on compliance, violations, and complaints regarding the implementation of this Act.

(m) **PUBLIC ACCESS TO COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS.**—(1) All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public after at least 30 days advance public notice.

(2) The minutes of all meetings of the Council shall be made available to and readily accessible by the public.

(n) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—Each year the Council shall prepare and make publicly available a report which includes an identification and description of all programs and projects undertaken by the Council during the previous year as well as those planned for the coming year.

Such report shall also detail the allocation or planned allocation of Council resources for each such program and project.

SEC. 6. ASSESSMENTS.

(a) AMOUNT.—The Council shall set the initial assessment at no greater than one tenth of 1 cent per gallon of odorized propane. Thereafter, annual assessments shall be sufficient to cover the costs of the plans and programs developed by the Council. The assessment shall not be greater than one-half cent per gallon of odorized propane, unless approved by a majority of those voting in a referendum in both the producer and the retail marketer class. In no case may the assessment be raised by more than one tenth of 1 cent per gallon of odorized propane annually.

(b) OWNERSHIP.—The owner of odorized propane at the time of odorization, or the time of import of odorized propane, shall make the assessment based on the volume of odorized propane sold and placed into commerce. Assessments collected are payable to the Council on a monthly basis by the 25th of the month following the month of such collection. Propane exported from the United States to another country is not subject to the assessment.

(c) ALTERNATIVE COLLECTION RULES.—The Council may establish an alternative means of collecting the assessment if another means is found to be more efficient and effective. The Council may establish a late payment charge and rate of interest to be imposed on any person who fails to remit or pay to the Council any amount due under this Act.

(d) INVESTMENT OF FUNDS.—Pending disbursement pursuant to a program, plan, or project, the Council may invest funds collected through assessments, and any other funds received by the Council, only in obligations of the United States or any agency thereof, in general obligations of any State or any political subdivision thereof, in any interest-bearing account or certificate of deposit of a bank that is a member of the Federal Reserve System, or in obligations fully guaranteed as to principal and interest by the United States.

(e) STATE PROGRAMS.—The Council shall establish a program coordinating the operation of the Council with those of any State propane education and research council created by State law or regulation, or similar entity. Such coordination shall include a joint or coordinated assessment collection process, a reduced assessment, or an assessment rebate. A reduced assessment or rebate shall be 20 percent of the regular assessment collected in that State under this section. Assessment rebates shall be paid only to—

(1) a State propane education and research council created by State law or regulation that meets requirements established by the Council for specific programs approved by the Council; or

(2) a similar entity, such as a foundation established by the retail propane gas industry in that State, that meets requirements established by the Council for specific programs approved by the Council.

SEC. 7. COMPLIANCE.

The Council may bring suit in Federal court to compel compliance with an assessment levied by the Council under this Act. A successful action for compliance under this section may also require payment by the defendant of the costs incurred by the Council in bringing such action.

SEC. 8. LOBBYING RESTRICTIONS.

No funds collected by the Council shall be used in any manner for influencing legislation or elections, except that the Council may recommend to the Secretary changes in this Act or other statutes that would further the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 9. MARKET SURVEY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION.

(a) PRICE ANALYSIS.—Beginning 2 years after establishment of the Council and annually

thereafter, the Secretary of Commerce, using only data provided by the Energy Information Administration and other public sources, shall prepare and make available to the Council, the Secretary of Energy, and the public an analysis of changes in the price of propane relative to other energy sources. The propane price analysis shall compare indexed changes in the price of consumer grade propane to a composite of indexed changes in the price of residential electricity, residential natural gas, and refiner price to end users of No. 2 fuel oil on an annual national average basis. For purposes of indexing changes in consumer grade propane, residential electricity, residential natural gas, and end user No. 2 fuel oil prices, the Secretary of Commerce shall use a 5-year rolling average price beginning with the year 4 years prior to the establishment of the Council.

(b) AUTHORITY TO RESTRICT ACTIVITIES.—If in any year the 5-year average rolling price index of consumer grade propane exceeds the 5-year rolling average price composite index of residential electricity, residential natural gas, and refiner price to end users of No. 2 fuel oil in an amount greater than 10.1 percent, the activities of the Council shall be restricted to research and development, training, and safety matters. The Council shall inform the Secretary of Energy and the Congress of any restriction of activities under this subsection. Upon expiration of 180 days after the beginning of any such restriction of activities, the Secretary of Commerce shall again conduct the propane price analysis described in subsection (a). Activities of the Council shall continue to be restricted under this subsection until the price index excess is 10.1 percent or less.

SEC. 10. PRICING.

In all cases, the price of propane shall be determined by market forces. Consistent with the antitrust laws, the Council may take no action, nor may any provision of this Act be interpreted as establishing an agreement to pass along to consumers the cost of the assessment provided for in section 6.

SEC. 11. RELATION TO OTHER PROGRAMS.

Nothing in this Act may be construed to preempt or supersede any other program relating to propane education and research organized and operated under the laws of the United States or any State.

SEC. 12. REPORTS.

Within 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and at least once every 2 years thereafter, the Secretary of Commerce shall prepare and submit to the Congress and the Secretary a report examining whether operation of the Council, in conjunction with the cumulative effects of market changes and Federal programs, has had an effect on propane consumers, including residential, agriculture, process, and nonfuel users of propane. The Secretary of Commerce shall consider and, to the extent practicable, shall include in the report submissions by propane consumers, and shall consider whether there have been long-term and short-term effects on propane prices as a result of Council activities and Federal programs, and whether there have been changes in the proportion of propane demand attributable to various market segments. To the extent that the report demonstrates that there has been an adverse effect, the Secretary of Commerce shall include recommendations for correcting the situation. Upon petition by affected parties or upon request by the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Commerce may prepare and submit the report required by this section at less than 2-year intervals.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. SCHAEFER] and the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. SCHAEFER].

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1514, the Propane Education and Research Act of 1995. This bill, introduced by Mr. TAUZIN, allows the propane industry to establish a propane checkoff fee to fund propane research, development, education, and marketing activities. H.R. 1514, has broad support from the propane industry.

Propane is an important fuel in our national energy mix. It is used to dry crops, heat homes, fuel vehicles, and as a feedstock for plastics and chemicals. Importantly, it is a clean fuel having emissions which are lower than many other fossil fuels.

In summary, this bill would allow propane producers and retail marketers to conduct a referendum on the establishment of the Propane Education and Research Council. The council, made up of large and small propane producers and retail marketers from diverse geographic regions, would then be allowed to collect one-tenth of 1 cent on every gallon of propane sold. The amount assessed could ultimately rise to one-half of 1 cent.

The funds collected through this fee, approximately \$8 million per year, are to be used to fund research, educational, safety, and marketing programs determined worthwhile by the council. Importantly, if the activities of the council cause the price of propane to rise disproportionately when compared to other similar fuels, certain activities of the council may be suspended.

As I have noted several times before, this bill does not require the expenditure of significant amounts of Federal money. Through this bill, the propane industry is looking for ways to help itself, not a Government handout. I believe it is appropriate for industry, rather than the Government, to fund most of the research on commercial applications of new technologies which will benefit that industry.

I appreciate the hard work Mr. TAUZIN has done on this bill, and I look forward to working with him to keep this bill moving forward.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise in support of H.R. 1514, the Propane Education and Research Act.

As Chairman SCHAEFER noted, this bill authorizes the propane industry to establish a propane checkoff fee to fund propane research, development, and education, including propane safety. Among other things, the bill establishes boundaries and obligations on the use of the collected funds and requires the Secretary of Commerce to report on propane prices and demand in the marketplace.

I am a cosponsor of this bill. I believe that the authorization of privately

funded research into improving the safety of propane use is important to the public. I also endorse research into propane's potential benefits for the environment. We cannot afford to overlook any alternative in our energy mix, and this bill will help maximize the benefits of this fuel.

I commend the bill's author, Mr. TAUZIN, and the propane industry for working to move this bill forward. This legislation was unanimously reported by the Commerce Committee on June 27, and I believe it has at this time, some 230 cosponsors on both sides of the aisle, including many members of the Commerce Committee.

I know of no objections to H.R. 1514 on this side of the aisle, and I would urge my colleagues to support it.

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

□ 1245

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

I would first of all thank the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] for his support on this very, very important legislation. Clean fuel I think is something that we have to look forward to in the future of this country, as well as alternative fuels. We certainly want to go on record as supporting that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. TAUZIN], the chief sponsor of the bill, who has been pushing this for a long time.

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank Chairman SCHAEFER for shepherding this bill to the House floor today and for all his extraordinary cooperation and support, and I particularly want to say the same thing for the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. PALLONE, the ranking minority member, who has been a sponsor and a very good friend for many years and a very strong supporter of this effort. I want to thank the gentleman for all his personal efforts in making this a bipartisan bill that has broad, in fact, bipartisan support from nearly 231 cosponsors in the House, Democrats and Republicans coming together behind a bill that makes just good common sense.

This bill has 34 cosponsors in the U.S. Senate, led by Senator DOMENICI. It has large support in this body. It is similar to the bill we offered in the last Congress. It was not acted upon before the Congress adjourned. We learned from last Congress' efforts and we have made improvements in this bill.

Propane, as the Speaker knows, is an incredibly important fuel for many Americans—60 million Americans use propane. It is economical and it is environmentally sound. It is used by 7.7 million homes for cooking and hot water heating. It is used by one-half of all American farmers to dry crops, power tractors, and warm greenhouses, and it is used for recreational purposes by tens of millions of people for outdoor cooking, camping, and recreational vehicles.

It is one of the very few fuels that does not receive Federal money in support of education, research, safety, and marketing efforts. And so this bill represents the best example of private funded research programs in America. It simply gives the propane industry, from the producers to the marketers and suppliers, an opportunity themselves to put together a research, education, safety, and marketing program for this critically important fuel for America.

Again, it is a bill that has broad support not only in the industry but among so many Americans and so many Members of this House and the body on the other side. I want to thank the chairman of the committee for bringing it forward, and I particularly again want to single out the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] for his extraordinary efforts in cooperation, and urge adoption of the bill.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCHAEFER. 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. 1514.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WICKER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. SCHAEFER. Mr. Speaker, I again thank both the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] and the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. TAUZIN] for working with us on this very, very important piece of legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. SCHAEFER] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1514, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WAIVING MEDICAID ENROLLMENT COMPOSITION

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3871) to waive temporarily the Medicaid enrollment composition rule for certain health maintenance organizations.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3871

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

SECTION 1. WAIVER OF 75/25 MEDICAID ENROLLMENT RULE FOR CERTAIN MANAGED CARE ORGANIZATIONS.

The requirement of section 1903(m)(2)(A)(ii) of the Social Security Act is waived—

(1) with respect to Catholic Health Services Plan of Brooklyn and Queens, Inc. (doing business as Fidelis Health Plan) and Managed Healthcare Systems of New York, Inc., for contract periods through January 1, 1999, and

(2) with respect to Health Partners of Philadelphia, Inc., for contract periods through December 31, 1999.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. TAUZIN] and the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. TAUZIN].

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Chairman BLILEY and Chairman BILIRAKIS, I bring to the floor H.R. 3871 and urge support of the measure.

H.R. 3871 amends title 19 of the Social Security Act to extend 3 existing 75-25 percent waivers of section 1903. Section 1903 is the section of the current Medicaid law that requires that Medicaid beneficiaries constitute less than 75 percent of the membership of any prepaid health maintenance organization.

A present, a number of States and health plans are operating under federally approved waivers of this section. The bill we are considering today extends those 75-25 waivers held by 3 of these plans: Health Partners of Philadelphia, Fidelis Health Plan of New York, and Managed Healthcare Systems of New York.

Health Partners of Philadelphia is a not-for-profit voluntary health maintenance organization comprised of local teaching hospitals. It is independently licensed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and fully accredited by the National Committee for Quality Assurance. It serves approximately 87,000 Medicaid recipients and 250 commercially enrolled individuals in Philadelphia and the surrounding area.

While Health Partners' chief focus is on primary care, health education and prevention, it also provides transportation services, expanded vision and dental benefits, multilingual capability, 24-hour access to mental health and substance abuse treatment, as well as home visits for new and expectant mothers and fathers.

Fidelis Health Plan, operated by the Catholic Health Services Plan of Brooklyn and Queens, was established by the Catholic medical center which serves those two areas. The principal focus of the care provided by Fidelis to its 19,960 Medicaid recipients is primarily in preventive care as well as health education. Enrollees elect their own primary care practitioner who serves as personal provider and coordinates the primary and specialty care they receive through the plan.

Finally, Managed Healthcare Systems of New York, a minority-controlled managed care company founded