

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the matter just considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is their objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

ELECTION AS MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I offer a resolution (H. Res. 120) and I ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

HOUSE RESOLUTION 120

Resolved, That the following named Members be, and that they are hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

To the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Tim Holden of Pennsylvania; Nick Lampson of Texas.

To the Committee on Science: Ellen Tauscher of California.

To the Committee on International Relations: James Davis of Florida.

To the Committee on National Security: Ciro Rodriguez of Texas.

To the Committee on Resources: Lloyd Doggett of Texas.

To the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight: Harold Ford of Tennessee.

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

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXTENDING ORDER OF THE HOUSE OF FEBRUARY 12, 1997 THROUGH APRIL 23, 1997

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the order of the House of February 12, 1997, be extended through April 23, 1997.

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

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, APRIL 21, 1997

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today it adjourn to meet at 3 p.m. on Monday next.

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

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT FROM MONDAY, APRIL 21, 1997, TO WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 1997

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House ad-

journs on Monday, April 21, 1997, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, April 23.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

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SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

TREMENDOUS STRIDES AT HUGHES DANBURY OPTICAL SYSTEMS, INC.

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

Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great admiration and gratitude for the tremendous strides that have been made in the last 4 decades by the people of Hughes Danbury Optical Systems, Inc. Hughes Optical is not only a long-time employer in Connecticut's Fifth District, they have made enormous contributions toward our Nation's pioneering efforts in space. Their technological leadership has resulted in advanced instruments that have enabled scientists around the world to probe the universe and gain a better understanding of our cosmological origins.

Most recently, Hughes developed and manufactured both the optical telescope assembly and the fine guidance sensors for NASA's Hubble space telescope. They have been a critical team member in the successful daily operations of this space observatory and the on-orbit servicing missions that will keep Hubble healthy and productive for years to come. In fact, one instrument, the first of Hubble's to be recycled, has been returned to Danbury this month for its 1-billion-mile maintenance work.

In operation for nearly 7 years and having orbited our globe over 37,000 times, this fine guidance sensor will be refurbished and upgraded by the skilled engineers and technicians at Hughes Danbury Optical. It will then be returned to Hubble in 1999 to carry out the final leg of the space telescope's planned 15-year mission.

In addition, we can confidently look forward to further achievements in science when NASA's advanced X-ray astrophysics facility, a companion observatory to the Hubble, is launched later this decade, also carrying optics manufactured by this dedicated group at Hughes Danbury Optical Systems.

I salute all of Hughes' talented and dedicated people for giving us the ability to confidently enter the new high-tech millennium ahead. Their cutting edge contributions have played an irreplaceable role in making our Nation the leader in both the discovery of our universe and in the development of our technological achievements.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN SHOULD NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN

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

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, the budget negotiations, by some accounts, are not getting very close to agreement. This brings up again, and I say again advisedly, the prospect of a shutdown of Government. It is not too early to start thinking about that, even though we have not finished the month of April. But because of the nature of the budget process, it is something that can be in our futures, unfortunately.

Everybody knows by now that since 1989, for four or five Congresses since then, or whatever that number is, I have been proposing legislation that would prevent a Government shutdown, and it works on a simple formula: At the end of the budget period of September 30, for instance, if no new budget has been negotiated between the President and the Congress, then automatically, by way of instant replay, as I am fond to say, the next day, the dawn of the new fiscal year, would bring about last year's numbers for a period of time under a continuing resolution until a budget can be met. This means, upon passage of this type of legislation, we will never face a shutdown again. That was a horrible aspect of the last Congress when we had to explain to the American people how it was that the Government shut down.

I myself believe that the President failed in his responsibilities there, because if he had signed the appropriations in the first place, the shutdown would not have occurred. Others blame the Republican Congress for proposing measures that the President found necessary to veto. So, who is to blame? That blame game can be played all year long, and we would never get the business of the Congress accomplished. My legislation would ensure that no shutdown would occur.

Now, where are we? Here in 1997, we are approaching the period of time when we will be dealing with the supplemental appropriations. We have good information to the effect that on the Senate side, Senators MCCAIN and LOTT, HUTCHINSON, STEVENS, and others

are pursuing the proposals that I have made over these years. In fact, I have conferred with them several times and have had press conferences with them. They are ready to insert into the supplemental appropriations a measure that is similar to mine.

This is good news, because it means eventually that the House will have to act on it. Meanwhile, our own appropriations process for the supplementals is on its way to fruition. We are going to see what we can do to add it to this side's complement of the budget process for supplemental appropriations.

In the meantime, we have received endorsement from several important citizen organizations. The most recent one was from the Concord Coalition which, in response to our proposal, sent us a letter saying, quote:

Enactment now of this fall-back funding would remove the possibility that Government agencies would shut down later this year due to the inability of the Congress and the President to agree on spending. Your amendment tilts the process in favor of making these tough decisions and away from counterproductive and deficit-increasing political games.

That is an important endorsement that we received from the Concord Coalition.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce commented in a letter to us:

Your legislation's provision of temporary funding until Congress and the President come to an agreement means that the threat of closing portions of the Government could no longer be used by either side in an attempt to pass a budget. Negotiations over spending bills would then remain more focused on the legislation's merits, yielding a more rational and sound process.

So says the President of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in a letter directly sent to us to endorse our legislation.

We have many, many different kinds of endorsements from citizens' groups, contractors' groups, Federal employees' groups, and others. The time has come to allow this process to become a part of our law. It is a shame to permit our Government to shut down at any time, not for 5 minutes.

I cite the most blatant example of why it should never happen. On the Columbus Day weekend of 1990, while we had amassed 500,000 of our young people in Saudi Arabia waiting for Desert Storm, our Government shut down. We should never let anything like that happen again.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mrs. KELLY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. KELLY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

TAX CODE SHOULD NOT PUNISH MARRIED COUPLES AND FAMILIES

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

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, today, on this Thursday of tax week, I would like to talk with my colleagues and the American people about one of the worst features in our Tax Code. It is the way in which the Government punishes families and punishes husbands and wives for deciding to be married.

Just a couple of weeks ago I received a letter from one of my constituents in Straughn, IN, Sharon Mallory and Darryl Pierce. Here is a portrait of them that they sent along with their letter.

Sharon writes to me, My boyfriend, Darryl Pierce, and I would very much like to get married, but we figured, if we get married, not only would I forfeit my \$900 tax refund check, we would be writing a check to the IRS for \$2,800. This amount was figured for us by an accountant at the local H&R Block in New Castle.

"Now," Sharon goes on to write, "this system is old and outdated, antiquated. I do not understand how the Government can ask such questions as single, married, dependents. Employers, bankers, realtors and creditors are forbidden by law to ask these questions. The same should apply to the Government."

The marriage penalty is clearly punishing Sharon and Darryl. They want to get married, and yet their accountant tells them the U.S. Government is

going to tax them more when they do get married.

Oftentimes, we find that the Tax Code penalizes families with children as well.

One of the worst aspects of the marriage penalty is that it discriminates against women. If a woman has been married, started to raise a family and the children start to be old enough so that she can go back to work, she faces a marginal tax rate of over 50 percent. That means for every dollar she earns, 50 cents goes to the Government in taxes.

This is wrong, and we should not be punishing women who make that choice to go back to work.

Now, married couples are punished by the Tax Code with the marriage penalty, but when couples decide to get married and then have children, they are punished once again. According to the Center for Policy Analysis, the marriage penalty for a couple earning \$20,000, that is not a lot of money, maybe about minimum wage for both people, they will be punished approximately \$1,200, and they have two children.

Right now, the marriage penalty is about \$180 for a couple. When they have children, it skyrockets to \$1,265. Or, for example, the Center points out that a married couple earning \$50,000 each is punished \$1,300 for being married, but when they start to have children, that skyrockets to \$1,500 per child. People ask me, does this really discourage families, does it discourage marriage?

Well, my wife, Ruthie and I met a couple the other week in Indianapolis. Both of them are doctors, and their accountant told them, you could save \$6,000 if you file for a divorce and file your taxes separately.

This is wrong and we must end the marriage penalty in our Tax Code. It is wrong for Government to punish married couples in this country. It is wrong for them to punish families who have children.

Why should young people, when they decide to get married and start a family, face the prospect of the Government telling them, you are going to pay more in taxes because you are married? Just think what families could do with that money. Many families need it to pay the electric bill or buy food for their children. \$1,500 per children per year means that they could save about \$30,000 when their children go to college.

We need to let these working families keep more of their money so that they can pay the bills, they can buy food for their children, and they can save for college.

Let me quote from Sharon and Darryl's letter. They closed it by saying, "Darryl and I would very much like to be married, and I must say, it broke our hearts when we found out we can't because the Government punishes us. We hope some day the Government will allow us to get married and not penalize us for it."