

This legislation does not benefit only persons with disabilities, it also has major benefits for the Federal Government and the taxpayer. If an additional one-half of 1 percent of the current Social Security Disability and Supplemental Security Income recipients were to cease receiving benefits as a result of employment, the savings and cash assistance would total \$3.5 billion over the worklife of the individuals.

This worthy legislation was passed by the House overwhelmingly earlier this year, and I expect it will enjoy similar support today.

Part B of the underlying bill is a collection of tax extenders. I am pleased that this agreement includes a 5-year extension for research and development tax credit. Science and technology are critical for our future development, our knowledge about the world around us, and our understanding of ourselves.

I have long been a strong supporter of incentives to encourage businesses to invest in the development of new technologies and products. Through its existence, the R&D tax credit has served as a fundamental component of our Nation's competitiveness strategy by increasing the amount of research undertaken by the private sector.

One key provision which I would have strongly supported had it been allowed to remain in the bill would have entitled workers to better pension benefits through what is known as section 415 of the tax code. But, regrettably, this provision was left at the station.

In addition, the bill includes a delay in the implementation of rules proposed by the Department of Health and Human Services to restructure organ allocation in our Nation. While this delay is not likely to please people on either side of this emotional issue, it should at least allow the Congress to debate this matter more fully when we return in January.

Mr. Speaker, my main regret on the legislation is that we are dealing with what should have been several bills and are, instead, forced to consider them as a single package. This approach limits debate and prohibits many Members from exercising their right to discuss the legislation. It is unfair and it is unnecessary. There is no reason why these bills should not have been brought up earlier under open rules with full debate. This is to say nothing of the many, many worthwhile bills that are being pushed aside altogether in the majority's rush to adjourn.

But we are coming back with renewed energy and commitment to passing the Patients' Bill of Rights, increasing the minimum wage for working families, and halting the violence and gunfire which threatens our homes and our communities.

Mr. Speaker, by all accounts, this will be the final rule to be considered this century. This is also the final rule of this millennium. Those of us who serve on this important committee are keenly aware of its historical and institutional role in this Congress on behalf

of the American people. Grounded by that tradition and honored by the opportunity, we are thankful to the Members who have gone before us, and we look forward to the new millennium and meeting the challenges facing the American people in the 21st Century. I am grateful for my colleagues on the Committee on Rules.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) for noting that this is the last rule of this millennium. From my perspective, I had forgotten about that, and I thank the gentlewoman for bringing it up.

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

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ELECTION OF MEMBER TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I offer a resolution (H. Res. 391), and I ask unanimous consent for its consideration in the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 391

Resolved, That the following named Member be, and is hereby, elected to the following standing Committees of the House of Representatives:

Committee on Agriculture and Committee on Science: Mr. Baca of California.

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

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1800

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1180, TICKET TO WORK AND WORK INCENTIVES IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1999

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 387, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 1180) to amend the Social Security Act to expand the availability of health care coverage for working individuals with disabilities, to establish a Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program in the Social Security Administration to provide such individuals with meaning-

ful opportunities to work, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Pursuant to House Resolution 387, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of November 17, 1999, at page H12174.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the conference report H.R. 1180.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of H.R. 1180, the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Act, which also contains an important package of tax relief for American workers and families.

First, let me discuss the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Act. Most of those receiving disability benefits today, due to the severity of their impairments, cannot attempt to work. Today, however, the Americans with Disabilities Act, along with advances in technology, medicine and rehabilitation, are opening doors of opportunity never thought possible to individuals with disabilities. Now people can telecommute to work. There are voice-activated computers. And, as technology provides new ways to clear hurdles presented by a disability, government must also keep pace by providing opportunity and not just dependency. Government should be helping people to work, not building barriers to independence and freedom.

This is one more victory in a string of health care achievements that the Republican Congress has guided into law. We strengthened Medicare, we made health insurance more portable, we passed tax breaks for long-term health care and to cut health insurance costs for people who buy their own health insurance, unfortunately, only to see all those vetoed by the President. And now we have modernized a key program for people with disabilities so that the Government is a help and not a hindrance. Mr. Speaker, that is truly a record of achievement and progress.

Another significant victory is the tax relief package in this bill. Because of our action, millions of families can now breathe easier knowing they will not get hit with a surprise tax hike for the next 3 years because we fixed the alternative minimum tax. The AMT is

a perfect example of an out-of-control Tax Code. Under the AMT, taxpayers are not allowed to claim the full child tax credit, the dependent care tax credit, the Hope Scholarship tax credit, and other tax credits which Congress passed to help Americans make ends meet. So the Tax Code was giving on one hand while quickly taking away with the other. This bill, today, fixes that for middle-income families, hundreds of thousands of them, for the next 3 years.

This bill also helps American companies maintain their cutting edge of research and development which will lead to new products, better medicines and a higher standard of living for consumers because it extends the most important R&D tax credit. For the first time in a long while, we have extended the tax credit for 5 years instead of hand-to-mouth year after year, on which no one can fully depend. Now businesses can plan for the future.

Another significant achievement of this bill is that Congress convinced the President that American taxpayers are paying too much and deserve some of their money back. Yes, it is only a small portion, but any amount of taxpayer funds that can be gotten out of Washington is money that cannot be spent on making government bigger. And that is exactly what this bill does.

This is one more achievement for a Congress that keeps delivering for the American people. We have made historic progress in paying down the debt, \$140 billion alone in the last 2 years. We are locking away the Social Security surplus so it cannot be spent on other things, and we are working on a long-term plan to save Social Security for all time. And now we have agreed to start returning a portion of the non-Social Security surplus to the taxpayers who send it here, and that is real progress.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I was hoping that on this last bill, that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and I have worked on together, that we might have found a more bipartisan tone than the one which the gentleman has just expressed today.

The gentleman talks about the accomplishments and what has been done for those people that are disabled as though his Democratic colleagues did not join with him to make this bill all that it is. The President presented this to the Congress and we worked together, and I agree that we do have a good bill.

There are some things that the gentleman does not talk about, and I expect that there is good reason for it. The gentleman has a delay here for the President's program dealing with transportation network for organ procurements, and the gentleman delays this from going into effect. It is controversial; it has nothing to do with

taxes, but somehow the gentleman got that in there.

The gentleman has some other bill that came from the other side, a contractor that deals with NOAA. It has nothing to do with taxes or the disabled.

And then, when we get involved with taxes, the gentleman talked about a Congress that produces. Well, I had hoped that we would not end on this note; but the last I heard from the majority, they were pulling up the Tax Code by the roots. True, that was 6 years ago, 5 years ago, 4, 3, 2, 1, and continuously counting down. The closest the other side came to even dealing with the Tax Code, as I recall, was a \$792 billion tax cut that never even got off the ground. And if we were to just weigh that bill, I hardly believe that even the staunchest conservative Republican would say that it simplified the Tax Code.

Now, I would have to agree with the gentleman that on the expiring provisions, the extensions of legislation that is existing law, that the gentleman and I worked together not as a Democrat or a Republican, but we worked together as tax writers, and with the help of the administration we were able to get these provisions paid for. We were able to put it in in a responsible way.

We could not stop all of the irresponsible things the other side wanted to do, so some people might want to focus on how the Republicans intend to make electricity out of chicken waste. But the gentleman insisted on the provision, we have it here, and God bless. The gentleman can join the wind and the closed-loop biomass, and if that is the way the other side wants to spend the credits, they are the majority and they can do it. But that is one of the things that we did not want to be associated with.

But I agree with the gentleman on the other good provisions. What are they? The extensions of existing law; to say that this Congress will not be irresponsible and allow these provisions to expire without doing the right thing.

So what I would like to say to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) is that he has no idea the pleasure it has been working with him on these positive things. And the only reason I stand up to point out some differences with the gentleman is that I would appreciate the gentleman not calling them Republican initiatives. The good ones are the bipartisan initiatives; the bad ones belong to the other side.

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

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume simply to say that I think that it is unfortunate that the gentleman from New York has sought to try to, through his rhetoric, create some degree of partisanship. I would have liked to have given him far more credit on this bill. Much of what is in here are things that he wanted, but he would

not sign the conference report. And, frankly, that does take away from bipartisanship.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD), a member of the committee.

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

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me this time, and I also thank him for his strong leadership on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this important bill. Helping people with disabilities live up to their full potential has been a top priority of mine ever since being elected to Congress, in fact, 10 years before as a State senator as well. I also strongly support the tax extender provisions in this bill.

I must say that I was disappointed, however, that the administration insisted that an important revenue-raising provision be dropped from the final agreement. This provision was based on legislation I sponsored, H.R. 3082, which was cosponsored by a strong bipartisan majority on the Committee on Ways and Means. This legislation would have protected employees' stock ownership plans, ESOPs for S-corporation workers by preventing the abuse of tax rules that help them build retirement savings and equity in their company. But unfortunately, the administration wanted to impose a draconian scheme that would have effectively killed ESOPs; would have killed this savings opportunity for thousands of American workers.

Thanks to the leadership of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and the bipartisan support for S-corporation ESOPs in Congress on the Committee on Ways and Means and in the full body, the administration's misguided proposal was soundly rejected in negotiations over this extenders package, and for that I am grateful. This was a victory for American workers and a victory for boosting America's dangerously low savings rate.

Although these ESOPs S-Corporation legislation was not enacted in this bill this session, I am pleased that Congress resisted the administration's plan to dismantle ESOPs, because they are highly effective retirement savings programs.

We are going to be back with this next year, and again I thank the chairman for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the bill before us. Helping people with disabilities live up to their full potential has been one of my top priorities even since I was first elected to public office.

I also strongly support the important tax extender provisions which will save families from being unfairly penalized by the Alternative Minimum Tax and will keep U.S. businesses competitive, innovative and job-creating.

I was disappointed the Administration insisted that an important revenue-raising provision be dropped from the final agreement. This provision was based on legislation I introduced (H.R. 3082) which is cosponsored by a

strong bipartisan majority of the Ways and Means Committee.

H.R. 3082 would protect employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs) for S corporation workers by preventing the abuse of tax rules that help them build retirement savings and equity in their company. But unfortunately, the Administration wanted to impose a draconian scheme that would have effectively killed this savings opportunity for thousands of American workers.

Thanks to the leadership of Chairman ARCHER and the bipartisan support for S corporation ESOPs in Congress, the Administration's misguided proposal was soundly rejected in negotiations over this extenders package. That was a victory for American workers, and a victory for boosting America's dangerously low savings rate.

Although H.R. 3082 was not enacted in this session, I am pleased Congress resisted the Administration's plan to dismantle these ESOPs, which are a highly effective retirement savings program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I can't tell you how long I have waited, along with many of my friends with disabilities in Minnesota, for this day. As many of my colleagues know, I have been working hard to help people with disabilities live up to their full potential since my election to this body in 1990, and as a Minnesota State Senator ten years prior. In fact, in 1993, Rep. Pete Stark and I introduced legislation to achieve the same goal we seek today.

As I have reminded my colleagues before, it was nine years ago that many of us enacted the ADA. It was nine long years ago that president Bush signed it into law and said, "Many of our fellow citizens with disabilities are unemployed. They want to work and they can work . . . this is a tremendous pool of people who will bring to jobs diversity, loyalty, low turnover rate, and only one request: the chance to prove themselves."

Mr. Speaker, despite the remarkably low unemployment rate in this country today, many of those with disabilities are still asking for this change to prove themselves in the workplace.

Despite all the good that the ADA has done to date, there is still room for improvement. The ADA did not remove all the barriers within current federal programs that prohibit people with disabilities from working. It's time to eliminate work disincentives for people with disabilities!

Eliminating work disincentives for people with disabilities is not just humane public policy, it is sound fiscal policy. It's not only the right thing to do; it's the cost-effective thing to do!

Discouraging people with disabilities from working, earning a regular paycheck, paying taxes and moving off public assistance actually results in reduced federal revenues.

People with disabilities have to make decisions based on financial reality. Should they consider returning to work or even making it through vocational rehabilitation, the risk of losing vital federal health benefits often becomes too threatening to future financial stability. As a result, they are compelled not to work. Given the sorry state of present law, that's generally a reasonable and rational decision.

We must transform these federal programs into spring-boards to the workforce for people with disabilities. This important bill does just that.

As I have said many times, preventing people from working runs counter to the American spirit, one that thrives on individual achievements and the larger contributions to society that result.

I implore my colleagues to vote for this important legislation before us today!

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and would just like to say to the chairman that I understand that my signature was expected at midnight last night, and I am sorry I could not be with him, because then the gentleman might have treated me more gently this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN).

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important bill. It contains some very important provisions. I want to applaud the Clinton administration for the initiative and bringing forward the Ticket to Work legislation. It removes impediments from disabled individuals being able to return to work. It will save us money. If we get people off of disability to work, as they want to work, this legislation is very important.

Secondly, the tax extenders are very important. We all want to extend the tax provisions that would otherwise expire, whether it be for research and development or some of the other provisions that are in the bill.

But, Mr. Speaker, I must express my concern about a provision that was added that deals with the fair allocation of organs that would block HHS's regulation in this area. I believe that that provision will jeopardize the health of critically ill patients, and it is also inconsistent with our last vote on the budget omnibus bill.

The HHS regulation went through a process. It listened to the public; it listened to the Institute of Medicine and came forward with recommendations that tries to take geographical politics out of organ distribution and do it to people who are the most critically in need.

□ 1815

I hope we can follow the compromise that was in the last bill because that was a fair compromise that was reached that requires HHS to go out and listen and explain the regulations to the public. It is inconsistent with the provisions that are in this bill.

I hope that HHS will not have to follow the language because it is inconsistent with the last bill because, otherwise, I think we are going to jeopardize the health of the critically-ill individuals.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAZIO).

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER), the chairman of the Committee on

Ways and Means, for his fine work and for his leadership in getting this to the floor. Let me thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY), the chairman of my committee, for holding hearings immediately and being the first to actually move the Work Incentives Improvement Act.

This has been a remarkable achievement. I think there are many who believe that we would never get to this day. But, in fact, we are here.

I want to thank people on both sides of the aisle, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON), the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD), the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI), and the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) for working in a bipartisan fashion on the Work Incentives Improvement Act.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we have the privilege of taking the most significant stride forward for rights of disabled people since the Americans with Disabilities Act. We are addressing the next great frontier when it comes to fully integrating disabled Americans into society, giving them the same economic opportunities that the rest of us enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, many Americans with disabilities rely on Federal health care and social services, assistance that makes it possible for them to lead independent and productive lives. But, unbelievably, we condition this assistance on their destitution. People with disabilities must get poor and stay poor if they are going to retain their health care benefits. They have got to choose between working and surviving.

That is why I introduced the Work Incentives Improvement Act, and that is why we have over 250 cosponsors from both sides of the aisle to end this perverse system of allowing Americans with disabilities to enter the workforce without endangering their health care coverage.

Mr. Speaker, a 1998 Harris survey found that 72 percent of Americans with disabilities want to work, but the fact remains that only one-half of one percent of dependent disabled Americans successfully move to work. Each percentage point of Americans moving to work represents 80,000 Americans who want to pay all or part of their own way but cannot; 80,000 Americans who are forced by a poorly designed system to sit on the sidelines while American businesses clamor for qualified workers.

This bill, in the end, Mr. Speaker, is about empowering people, people like a 39-year-old Navy veteran from my district who used to work on Wall Street and hoped to become a stockbroker but an accident in 1983 left him a quadriplegic. And even though he requires assistance for even the most basic daily activities, he never gave up on his dream. And 10 years after his accident, he passed the grueling stockbroker licensing exam. But, like most disabled Americans, he cannot afford to lose his health care benefits. If it

were not for the current Federal rules, he would be a practicing, taxpaying stock broker today.

The Work Incentives Improvement Act ends this injustice. It rips down bureaucratic walls that stand between people with disabilities and a paycheck. It is important to remember that a paycheck means a lot more than just money. For a disabled American or any American, it means self-sufficiency. It means pride in a job well done. It means dignity.

Mr. Speaker, we have come a long, long way since the time when Americans with disabilities were shunted off to the farthest corners of our communities. Many Americans have been waiting for us to give them a chance to pursue the American dream. Today let us tell them that the wait is over. Let us get the Work Incentives Improvement Act passed today.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, the disability provisions of this act are really important and are going to make a difference in the lives of many. But I want to talk about two other provisions that will make our country more prosperous, and that is the R&D tax credit and Section 127 of the Tax Code.

Our party's position, the Democratic position, as stated by our leader is that the R&D tax credit should be permanent. This 5-year extension is really in the right direction. I am happy to support it. But next year we are going to go for permanent.

On 127, I was so pleased that the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), the ranking member, has taken so much time to work on this. It is important that we support employer-supported tuition reimbursement plans. In this day and age, when the best educated workforce means they will be competitive, encouraging employers to help employees to continue their education is essential.

Again, I am happy to support this extension, and I look forward to extending this to graduate education. I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) whose understanding and support of high-tech issues in this bill comes through loud and clear. He really followed through on the commitments he made when he came and visited Silicon Valley and really understood the issue of competitiveness and technology and education.

So kudos to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for his wonderful work. I look forward to taking both of these provisions just a little bit farther in the next Congress.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY), a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I do want to just correct a statement made by the prior speaker when she described their efforts to extend permanently the R&D tax credit.

We can tell our colleagues from negotiations that Mr. Summers, the Treasury Secretary, vehemently opposed that permanent extension. So that, if that is the position of the party, we would like the Secretary of the Treasury to be informed of that position so that it would be much easier for the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means to accomplish something he tried to do at the very outset of deliberations.

I want to also suggest to my colleagues how proud I am to stand up and support this bill. Credits to Puerto Rico and U.S. possessions, minimum tax relief for individuals, permitting full use of personal nonrefundable credits, welfare-to-work tax credits, work opportunity tax credits, a number of initiatives that I think will stimulate the economy, continue us on our road to prosperity, continue to see additional revenues to the Treasury so we can continue to reduce the debt of the American taxpayers to increase and enhance investment in America.

I commend the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER), the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, for seeing this bill to the successful conclusion. Especially, I would like to note the ticket-to-work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999.

So oftentimes some of our vulnerable citizens in society who have been stricken by illnesses and ailments have been unable to make the required choice of whether to stay employed and then forgo, if you will, the Social Security, the Medicare-Medicaid provisions. This bill now makes an attempt, to allow those capable and able individuals to be in the workforce, continue those vital health insurance needs provided by Medicaid and Medicare, and allow them to be productive, taxpaying citizens.

So I applaud the bill and I urge Members to vote for passage of this bill as it comes to the floor.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL), the former chairman and now ranking member of the Committee on Commerce, my friend and distinguished colleague.

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

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for his kindness to me.

We take one step forward and one back. The bipartisan agreement on organ allocations was reached during negotiations between Labor, HHS and on that appropriations bill.

The revised regulation would not become final until 42 days after enactment, sufficient time to enable the comments on the revisions and, if necessary, to make further modifications. Now we are witnessing an end run by opponents to this proposal with regard to organ allocation policy.

The legislation before us contains a moratorium of 90 days on any allocation regulation. This delay has a huge cost. The regulation calls for broader organ sharing. This is consistent with the conclusion of the National Academy of Sciences, which studied the allocation system.

HHS has stated that approximately 300 lives per year could be saved through broader sharing. The math is simple. There is a difference between a 42-day delay and a delay of almost 90 days.

Two more points to be made. First, blocking HHS oversight amounts to privatization of Medicare and Medicaid expenditures attributable to organ transplants. If my colleagues want to privatize Medicare, let them do it in the open and proper fashion.

Second, blocking HHS oversight continues the proliferation of State organ allocation statutes, at least 12 by last count. That is directly in conflict with the current allocation criteria and with good sense.

The same Members who decry political or bureaucratic involvement in organ allocation policy when they have HHS in mind are stunningly silent when politicians and bureaucrats involved in this are State officials.

A lack of leadership on the issue is creating immense fragmentation of organ allocation policies, just the opposite direction of where IOM said the allocation policies should go.

In like fashion, the Work Incentives Act of 1999 is a large step in the correct fashion. It will ensure that the disabled no longer have to choose between health care and their jobs. The bill also includes a demonstration project to provide health coverage to people who have serious conditions but are not fully disabled, these people who have multiple sclerosis or cerebral palsy. This would enable them to remain as working members of society.

Thanks to hard work and dedication on the part of the administration and the disability community, additional funding has been secured for a very important project here.

During the past few weeks, controversy has swirled around proposed offsets in the bill. Parties from both sides have agreed to remove some of the most contentious payfors. However, I have heard objections from many of my constituents about two offsets that remain, a provision to change the way that students loans are financed and a tax on payments to attorneys who represent Social Security claimants.

Although I am going to vote for this bill, I have substantial concerns for these offsets. And, very truthfully, the things that are done here are wrong.

The Work Incentives Act has overcome many obstacles in its legislative history. The bill is on the floor today because it is based on good policy and because it will make a difference of lives of people with disabilities. For that reason, I support it.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), the respected chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is about work. Its goal is to help individuals with disabilities work and support themselves and support their families.

Today only three in ten adults with disabilities work, compared with eight in ten adults without disabilities. A big reason is Government programs take away cash and medical benefits if disabled individuals find and keep jobs. That must change. And it will change under this bill that is before us today.

No one should be afraid of losing benefits if they do the right thing and try to work. We should reward and help especially those who struggle to overcome their disabilities. That is why we are offering the new tickets disability individuals can use to obtain whatever services they need in order to work.

But we do not stop there. We extend health care coverage for a total of 8½ years so that no one has to fear losing their medical coverage if they go to work.

Some may still not risk going to work for fear of having to wait months or even years to get back on the benefits if their health begins to once again decline. So we ensure disabled individuals can quickly get back onto the rolls if they try to work but their health deteriorates.

That is the right kind of safety net, one that encourages work and protects those who need help along the way. From providing more help, finding and keeping a job, ensuring health care coverage, to strengthening the safety net to those who cannot stay on the job, this legislation does the right thing. This is another historic step to ensure that everyone can know the dignity that comes with work.

I urge all Members to support this bill.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Health and Environment of the Committee on Commerce.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress owes a debt of gratitude to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAZIO) and to the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN). Thanks largely to their efforts, we have an opportunity to do something right. I wish I could say that more often.

We owe a debt of gratitude especially to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) under whose leadership proponents of this legislation managed to defend repeated attempts to emasculate it.

Finally, we owe a debt of gratitude to President Clinton. The President and

his exceptional health team have demonstrated their commitment to the goals of this bill in a number of ways, lending their assistance again and again as this arduous process moved forward.

The idea behind the bill is simple. If individuals want to work, let us help them work. For many disabled individuals, the ability to work hinges on reliable health care. Yet, under current law, work means losing access to that care. By providing continued access to Medicare and Medicaid, the Work Incentives Improvement Act enables individuals to leave the disability roles and go back to work.

H.R. 1180 taps into the tremendous human potential that all of us have and takes us closer to a time where equal opportunity for disabled people is no longer an objective, it is a fact.

Nothing is perfect. This bill could have been much closer to that ideal if the Republican leadership had not co-opted it with a self-serving moratorium on the organ allocation bill. And there is a user fee provision that may reduce the number of attorneys willing to represent disabled clients. It is not a particularly well thought out provision. But overall, Mr. Speaker, the bill is a victory for the disabled and a much needed reminder that American values are, in fact, intact.

I ask for support of the bill.

□ 1830

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON), the respected chairman of the Subcommittee on Human Resources of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I want to comment briefly on two parts of this bill. First of all, it is really a joy to know that people in my district who suffer from physical or mental disabilities and who want to work and are capable of work but cannot work because of fear of losing their health coverage are going to be able to work. And as the Christmas holidays approach and they are offered longer hours, I know that they are going to be able to realize their dream of being a real part of the work team at their place of business. It is really a wonderful thing that we have done in this bill, to enable Americans simply to realize the opportunity of self-fulfillment that work offers.

But I also want to mention one other thing. How do we foster invention? Lots of times, we ask ourselves, how do we assure that there will be a strong economy for our children? In this bill is one of the keys. For the first time ever, we make the research and development tax credit in place and law for 5 years. Our goal is permanence, but we have never had 5 years. This will enable companies to plan and enable them to invest at a pace and at dimensions of dollars that we have never seen before. That drives new products. That

drives state-of-the-art inventions. That drives economic leadership. And that drives good jobs, high-paying jobs, and a successful America.

I want to personally congratulate the gentleman from Texas for his dedication to the R&D tax credit that would be longstanding enough to foster the kind of growth and invention, support for an entrepreneurial economy that this R&D tax credit will achieve. I know that he would have preferred permanence as many of us would have. But this is a tremendous breakthrough. It is a real tribute to the gentleman from Texas and his dedication and to this Congress that we have extended the R&D tax credit for 5 years.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I guess I would like to focus on the dignity that this bill gives to many Americans who simply want a chance. I thank the ranking member. I thank the chairman of this committee. I could quarrel with the process in some of the extenders that we will also be including, but I want to respond with a focus on one of my constituents who saw me in the Heights, an area of my district in Houston, and spoke about her son. We were at a memorial giving tribute to those who had served in the military who lived in the Heights area. After the program, she came up and said, "What is the progress, when will you pass the Work Incentives Improvement Act? My son wants to be independent. My son wants to get on his feet. My son who is disabled simply wants to have his day in the sun."

And so this particular bill is of great relief to her and her family. It is a ticket to work and self-sufficiency program. And in fact over the years that I have been in Congress, I have enjoyed meeting with some of the physically and mentally disabled or challenged who have come to my office and have asked simply to be allowed to work and then not to lose their health benefits. That is their greatest crisis. In order for them not to be dependent, they need to have this kind of support system. I support this effort that would expand beneficiaries' access to public and private vocational rehabilitation providers and to employment service providers acting as employment networks under the program, and I support particularly the aspect of this bill that allows the disabled to go off and work and then, for example, if there is a problem, they still have the ability to come back within a 60-month period and get the benefits that they need without filing a new application. This is long overdue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this important measure that both allows disabled persons to retain their federal health benefits after they return to work along and authorizes extensions for several tax provisions.

The conference report on H.R. 1180, Work Incentives Improvement Act is a true measure

of bipartisan efforts and includes a compromise version of the original House and Senate bills. This bill would establish the "Ticket to Work and Self-sufficiency Program" that would expand beneficiaries' access to public and private vocational rehabilitation providers and to employment service providers acting as employment networks under the Program.

This bill will allow disabled individuals to receive an expedited reinstatement of benefits if they lose their benefits due to work activity. Disabled individuals would have 60 months after their benefits were terminated during which to request a reinstatement of benefits without having to file a new application. It is imperative that we protect these disabled individuals, and this bill would provide provisional benefits for up to six months while the Social Security Administration determines these requests for reinstatement.

In addition to allowing disabled persons to retain their federal health benefits after they return to work, this bill also includes extensions of various tax provisions, many of which are scheduled to expire at the end of this year. The conference agreement provides approximately \$15.8 billion in tax relief over five years (\$18.4 billion over 10 years) by extending certain tax credits.

More specifically, this measure extends the Research and Development tax credit for five years (this credit would be expanded to include Puerto Rico and possessions of the United States), the Welfare-to-Work and Work Opportunity tax credits for 30 months, and the Generalized System of Preferences through September 30, 2001. Finally, the measure includes approximately \$2.6 billion in revenue offsets over five years (\$2.9 billion over 10 years).

This bill also delays the effective date of the organ procurement and transplantation network final rule. This rider provides people with more time to comment on the rule and for the Secretary to consider these comments. Our organ distribution system requires changes to create a more national system, to diminish the enormous waiting times, and to ensure that those people who are suffering the most receive help in time. The late, great Walter Payton's sorrowful death is just another sad reminder that far too many people in need of organs are trapped on waiting lists.

Finally, the bill requires the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to continue existing contracts for its multi-year program for climate database modernization and utilization.

This measure clearly is important to the American people on many fronts. It is imperative that we pass this important piece of legislation. It is a sign that we are unified on both sides of the aisle, and it proves to the American public that we have put their needs above political posturing.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. OSE).

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1180, the Work Incentives Improvement Act. I want to express my sincere appreciation to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER) and to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL). We have heard much talk this evening about tax credits for R&D and the like and those are very

important. But when I read this bill and I listen to the conversations, I hear freedom. I hear freedom for 5 million people who right now are confined or constrained because the law does not allow them to maintain their health benefits.

Mr. Speaker, if I could say one thing that just sends me home here soon with a light heart, it is that at the end of the 20th century as we did at the end of the 18th century, for over 5 million Americans this bill lets freedom ring. It lets them compete and participate. I applaud my colleagues.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATKINS), another respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

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

Mr. WATKINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999. First and foremost I say to my committee chairman and ranking minority member that the provisions here on the extenders is one that is going to be of great assistance and help to be able to continue moving the economy forward. The R&D for 5 years is a great need for business and industries that do a lot of research.

I would like to bring out a couple of things that are not highlighted, but I have had a chance of working personally with a number of individuals concerning this. One, the conference agreement would provide a 2-year open season beginning January 1 for clergy to revoke their exemption from Social Security coverage. This is something that a lot of ministers, and I have been associated with a lot of them through the fact that my former father-in-law was a minister, he is deceased now, but it is something I know he was concerned about back years ago.

The other provision is even a little closer. My wife and I have had our home available, licensed for foster children over the years; and I have worked with a lot of foster children. In this bill we have had a simplification of the definition of foster child under the earned income credit program. It provides for the simplification. Under this particular provision, a foster child would be defined as a child who is cared for by the taxpayer as if he or she were the taxpayer's own child; two, has the same principal place of abode as the taxpayer for the taxpayer's entire taxable year; and, three, either is the taxpayer's brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister or descendant, including an adopted child, of any such relative.

This is something that has been focused. I do not know if any of you have ever tried to work with a lot of the situation dealing with foster children, but it is a very cumbersome problem. This will help eliminate that.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER), another respected member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

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

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, let me begin my comments by just again praising the leadership of our committee's chairman for his efforts in putting together this good package that we are voting on today, a package that deserves bipartisan support, as well as the good ranking member for his efforts in making this a bipartisan effort today.

Mr. Speaker, this is a big victory for a lot of folks back home. The disabled are big winners with the ticket to work provisions in this bill, legislation that helps the disabled enter the workforce and keep their health care benefits. I really want to commend the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. HULSHOF) for his hard work and efforts on this.

It is also a victory for the taxpayers. This Congress said no to the President's \$238 billion in tax increases. This Congress said no to the President's plan to raid the Social Security Trust Fund by \$340 billion. I do want to express my biggest disappointment for this year and that is when the President vetoed our efforts to help 28 million married working couples when the President vetoed our efforts to eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

This legislation is good legislation. It helps folks back home in Illinois. There are three provisions I would like to highlight. Of course, the 5-year extension of the research and development tax credit. That is so important in Illinois, a multiyear commitment to providing this incentive for research into cancer, research into biotechnology, to increase food productivity, to increase the opportunity to grow our new economy, particularly in high technology since Illinois ranks fourth in technology. I also would note that Puerto Rico is included with this extension of the R&D tax credit, extension of the work opportunity tax credit.

We want welfare reform to work. If we want welfare reform to work, of course we want to ensure that there is a job for those on welfare. The work opportunity tax credits help contribute to a 50 percent reduction in the welfare rolls in Illinois. We extend it for 2½ years.

Third and last, I want to note the brownfields tax incentive, a provision that many of us worked on to include in the 1997 budget act. This is successfully working. Of course we extend it. I would point out that the district I represent on the South Side of Chicago, that the former Republic Steel property, the largest brownfield in Illinois, the largest new industrial park in Illinois benefited from this brownfields tax incentive. This is good legislation, and it deserves bipartisan support.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time. I would like to take this time to thank the gentleman from Texas for the courtesies he has extended to me. While we

have had major policy differences, he has always been a gentleman, he has been fair, he has been honest, and above all he has been sincere. I want to thank Mr. Singleton and the entire majority staff as well as Janice Mays. We have probably one of the best staffs in the House and they have worked hard and they have worked with us.

While it is my opinion that we did not accomplish too much in this first year, I look forward to working with the gentleman side by side, hand in hand to see what we can do to restore confidence in the Social Security system, the Medicare system, and see what we can do about prescription drugs.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time. I thank the gentleman for his comments. We have much work to do next year, where we can work hopefully together on a strong bipartisan basis on Social Security, trade issues, and many other issues before our committee.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify a provision relating to the rum cover over provision for Puerto Rico. The House-Senate conference agreement calls for an increase in the rum cover over for Puerto Rico from the current level of \$10.50 to \$13.25. It is my understanding that by an agreement between the Administration and the Governor of Puerto Rico, the Honorable Pedro Rossello, one-sixth of the \$2.75 increase in the rum cover over to Puerto Rico will be dedicated to the Puerto Rico Conservation Trust, a private, nonprofit section 501(c)(3) organization operating in Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rico Conservation Trust was created for the protection of natural resources and environmental beauty of Puerto Rico and was established pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of the Interior and Commonwealth of Puerto Rico dated December 24, 1968."

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I am going to vote for this legislation even though it is not paid for because added to the Ticket To Work program are important "must pass" tax provisions vital to all our constituents.

The most important provision in this bill is the extension of the current waiver of the alternative minimum tax rules affecting non-refundable personal credits. Without enactment of this provision, next April approximately 1 million taxpayers will find they owe more money to the federal government than they thought, for an average "stealth" tax increase of about \$900 each. Millions more will have to though the alternative minimum tax calculations, which can take 5 or 6 hours, just to find out they don't owe any more money.

In 1997 Congress approved new credits for children, and for education. We promised our constituents that the federal government would help them with these responsibilities. However, we subjected these credits to the alternative minimum tax. The result is that more and more middle income Americans will be forced into the AMA by our actions—and we will rightly get the blame.

So now we have to fix it. This bill does that for 3 years. But what we really need to do is to fix this problem permanently, because no middle income American should ever by sub-

ject to the alternative minimum tax calculation simply because they decided to send their kids to college.

Mr. Speaker, other members may focus their remarks regarding taxes on the research and development tax credit, or the Subpart F extension, or employer provided educational assistance. All important items. But not items that drive this bill—what is of paramount importance is the AMA fix, and I am pleased that we are finally taking steps to fix this for the immediate future.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise with regret to oppose what is being called the "Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act Conference Report." This title would never pass the "Truth in Labeling" test if it were on a box of food, but you can get still away with such falsehoods here in Congress—especially in the waning hours of the session.

The reason for my regret is that I have worked much of the year to encourage passage of the Work Incentives Improvement Act here in the House. This legislation is vitally important for disabled individuals. Our current system—which actively discourages disabled people from returning to the workforce—simply makes no sense. Allowing disabled people to maintain their health insurance through Medicare when they return to work is something that should have always been law, not something we are finally doing today.

I support that component of this bill which we are here considering today. I am unhappy that it has been weakened from the version that originally passed the House. In that bill, we would have given disabled individuals the ability to keep their Medicare health insurance for 10 years, while the bill before us today only extends that coverage for 8½ years. But, there is no question that this would be a significant improvement from the status quo.

However, there is much more to this bill than the title would suggest. Through late night negotiations, this bill changed. In addition to the provisions relating to the Work Incentive Improvement Act, the bill includes two completely unrelated provisions. The first of these is a 90-day moratorium preventing the Secretary of Health and Human Services from implementing a regulation to improve our organ allocation program in the U.S. Also included is a package of tax extenders that is not fully paid for.

The moratorium on the organ allocation regulation is especially egregious. The regulation is a product of negotiations with the transplant community, patients, and the general public and ensures the sickest patients get organs first—instead of basing life and death decisions on geography.

Republicans included this same 90-day delay of the HHS organ allocation regulations in legislation earlier this year. The President vetoed that bill and cited the organ allocation moratorium as "a highly objectionable provision." After that veto, Congressional budget negotiators and the White House agreed to permit the HHS organ allocation rule to go into effect after a 42-day consultation period. Yet only a few days later, they have decided to renege on that agreement.

Congress has already delayed the HHS rules for over a year—permitting the Institute of Medicine (IoM) to study the current system. The IoM report strongly validates the HHS regulations by calling for broader sharing of organs and for HHS to exercise its "legitimate

oversight responsibilities." Twelve patients die every day while awaiting an organ transplant under the current system. The fact of the matter is this moratorium is a pork barrel project for members of Congress who either represent the federal contractor, or small transplant centers with poorer outcomes who stand to lose under the new regulations. The Secretary's regulation will save lives. This moratorium will cause people to die. Which side do you think is right?

Just like every other bill the Republicans have tried to push through this Congress, the tax extender provisions in the bill give big tax breaks to big business. It includes tens of millions of rifle-shot give-aways to GE—certainly not one of the neediest taxpayers in this country. It also spends \$13 billion to give corporations money for research. Most companies would conduct research on their own regardless of whether or not taxpayers foot the bill. Do you really think that corporations like Schering-Plough would have halted research for their highly profitable drug Claritin if Congress had denied a research tax credit? Companies must conduct research in order to create profits. They don't need tax incentives from Congress to make a profit.

In addition, this bill throws money to the wind through the highly unsuccessful windmill tax credit. There are windmills up and down the highways of California in hopes that they might produce effective forms of electricity. Once again, we're extending \$3 billion in tax breaks to energy companies so that they can continue pouring money into a lofty goal. Coupled with this tax break is one that will provide tax incentives to energy companies who can produce energy from poultry droppings. Why stop at energy? We should give them tax incentives to produce gold from chicken droppings!

Because of these unrelated provisions that were snuck into an otherwise very worthy bill, I am forced to vote against this bill today.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1180, the Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999. As Chairman of the Committee on Science, I would like to highlight a provision of the bill that is particularly important to our nation's research base: the Research and Development Tax Credit (R&D tax credit).

H.R. 1180 includes the longest ever extension of the R&D tax credit. While I support a permanent extension of the R&D credit, this five-year extension is a step in the right direction. As federal discretionary spending for R&D is squeezed, incentives must be used to maximize private sector innovation and maintain our global leadership in high-tech, high-growth industries that help keep our economy the strongest in the world.

A long-term extension of the credit will aid the research community by creating incentives for private industry to fund research projects. Congress has extended the R&D Tax Credit repeatedly over a period of 18 years. The credit again lapsed on June 30th of this year. This five-year extension will put an end to the start-and-stop approach that has characterized this extension process.

A 1998 Coopers & Lybrand study found that U.S. companies would spend \$41 billion more (in 1998 dollars) on R&D as a result of extending the credit. This in turn would lead to greater innovation from additional R&D investment and would begin to improve productivity

almost immediately, adding more than \$13 billion a year to the economy's productive capacity by the year 2010. The Coopers & Lybrand report went on to note that the R&D tax credit would ultimately pay for itself. "In the long run," the report states, "\$1.75 of additional tax revenue (on a present value basis) would be generated for each dollar the government spends on the credit, creating a win-win situation for both taxpayers and the government."

Last year, the Science Committee released a National Science Policy Study entitled *Unlocking Our Future: Toward A New National Science Policy*. The *Unlocking Our Future* is the most comprehensive study of federal science policies ever conducted by Congress. And the full House passed a resolution adopting its recommendations. One of the study's primary recommendations was the permanent extension of the R&D tax credit. I am pleased that the House today is taking a concrete step toward enacting the study's recommendations.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1180, the conference report on the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act.

This bill will provide a true "Ticket-to-Work" for disabled individuals by bringing them back into the workforce while still providing them with a safety net of government services that are needed to help make the transition. It is an important first step toward addressing the disincentives which exist in current law that discourage disabled individuals from working.

According to a Washington Post article published earlier this year, 6.6 million working-age Americans receive disability checks from the Federal Government every month. All too often, these individuals are unable to return to the workforce. Among the barriers they face upon returning to work is they risk the loss of important federal benefits such as Medicare health care coverage. Under this legislation, individuals would be eligible for up to four and a half additional years of Medicare benefits. While I would have preferred to have individuals eligible for Medicare for an additional six years, I believe this is a positive step forward and that further steps should be taken in the future.

In addition, this bill provides a voucher that individuals can exchange for rehabilitation, employment or other necessary services with their provider of choice.

The Ticket to Work bill will change the Social Security Administration's disability programs for the better. As Tony Young of the United Cerebral Palsy Association said in his testimony before the Ways and Means Committee in March, these programs, "are transformed from a safety net into a trampoline; not only catching people with disabilities as they fall out of work, but also giving them a boost back into work as they are ready."

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, which is an important step toward helping individuals with disabilities be independent, and to become a vital part of the workforce.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1180, the Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999. I am a cosponsor of this important legislation and was proud to expeditiously move this proposal through my Subcommittee and support its passage through the House Commerce Committee.

My Subcommittee held a hearing at which we heard from federal, state and local officials, as well as individuals living with disabilities. All

of the witnesses emphasized the need for this legislation. They noted that the current system unfairly forces people to choose between work and health care.

H.R. 1180 was introduced in March by our colleagues RICK LAZIO and HENRY WAXMAN, and this bill underscores the positive power of bipartisanship.

The bill removes barriers for individuals who want to work. By encouraging work over welfare, it also promotes personal dignity and self-sufficiency.

Two federal programs—Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI)—provide cash benefits to people with disabilities. By qualifying for these benefits, individuals are also eligible for health coverage through Medicare and Medicaid. These programs provide comprehensive services that people with disabilities value and need.

Ironically, individuals with disabilities risk losing these health protections if they enter the work force. Under current law, earnings above a minimal amount trigger the loss of both cash benefits and health coverage under Medicare and Medicaid.

H.R. 1180 would allow states to expand the Medicaid buy-in option to persons with disabilities through two optional programs. The bill also creates a trial program to extend Medicare Part A benefits to SSDI recipients. Further, it provides infrastructure and demonstration grants to assist the states in developing their capacity to run these expanded programs.

Finally, the bill creates a new payment system for vocational rehabilitation programs that serve individuals with disabilities. Similar provisions were passed by the House of representatives last year.

As I have emphasized before, H.R. 1180 will help people help themselves. Approval of this bill by the House of Representatives today is an important step in improving the quality of life for millions of Americans who live with disabilities.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the conference report of H.R. 1180, the Work Incentives Improvement Act. This bill includes three separate bills, including the conference report for H.R. 1180, the tax extenders legislation, and a provision related to organ transplantation regulations. I strongly support all three of these proposals and urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I am pleased that the conference report for H.R. 1180 does not include certain provisions related to school-based health services. An earlier version of this bill, as approved by the House, included Section 407 to help offset the costs associated with this bill. Section 407 would be detrimental to our local schools districts who have worked to screen children for Medicaid eligibility. According to the U.S. Census Bureau there are 4.4 million children who are eligible for, but not enrolled in, Medicaid. Under existing laws, public schools can receive reimbursements through the Medicaid Administrative Claiming (MAC) program to help screen for these Medicaid eligible children. I learned about these provisions through the efforts of a local school district, the La Porte Independent School District (PISD). PISD is the lead district for a consortium of 200 small and rural Texas school districts participating in the MAC program. After learning about this provision, I also organized a letter

to Speaker HASTERT in opposition to these off-set provisions. I am pleased that the conference committee has removed all provisions related to school-based health programs that would have been harmful.

I support passage of this measure because it ensures that disabled persons can keep their health insurance when they return to work. Under current law, disabled persons who are eligible for Social Security disability benefits are precluded from earning significant income without losing their Medicare or Medicaid health insurance. This bill would permit disabled persons to work while maintaining their health insurance coverage. For many disabled persons, this health insurance is critically important since they can neither afford nor purchase health insurance in the open market. This bill would provide SSDI beneficiaries with Medicare coverage for eight and ½ years, instead of the current 4-year term. This legislation also provides vocational rehabilitative services to disabled persons, ensuring their access to the training they need to become more self-sufficient. As an original cosponsor of the underlying bill, I support all of these provisions.

This bill also includes a critically important provision related to organ transplantation policy. This bill would impose a 90-day moratorium on the proposed Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) regulations related to organ transplantation policy that would change the current allocation system from a regionally-based system to a national medical-need system. This provision also includes a requirement that HHS must reopen this proposal for public comment about this issue. I am very concerned about the impact of this proposed regulation on organ transplants done at the Texas Medical Center. The Texas Medical Center and the local organ procurement organization, LifeGift, have done an excellent job of encouraging organ donations in our area. The impact of this regulation would be to override the current system which was developed in consultation with our nation's premier transplantation physicians and practitioners. If this new regulation were implemented, many of these organs could possibly be transferred away from the local patients who need them. I am pleased that Congress has acted to provide itself with sufficient time to reauthorize the National Organ Transplant Act (NOTA). The House has already approved this bill, giving the Senate sufficient time to consider and approve a NOTA measure.

This is an important bill which we should approve and I would urge my colleagues to vote for this bill.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the basic provisions of H.R. 1180, the Work Incentive Improvement Act. The core program contained in this bill is designed to provide support and health care assistance to severely disabled people who want to work despite the obstacles their disabilities present, indeed who are determined to work and become productive and contributing members of society.

These are people who need to keep their health care coverage through Medicaid and Medicare to enable them to stay in the work force. We owe them nothing less.

It is a testament to the compelling nature of their case that this bill has had such broad and bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate. The President has also been

strongly committed to seeing it enacted, from his call to the Congress to enact this program in his State of the Union message last January to the final negotiations to bring this bill here today. And I want to particularly note the contributions of RICK LAZIO, who I was pleased to join as the original sponsor of the bill, NANCY JOHNSON and BOB MATSUI from the Ways and Means Committee, and JOHN DINGELL and CHARLIE RANGEL who served on the conference committee.

We can all be proud of its enactment. I am especially pleased that the conference report increased the funds available to support demonstrations by States to provide health services to persons with potentially severe disabilities in order to keep their health from deteriorating and to allow them to continue to work. Surely, this is one of the most sensible and cost-effective things we can do.

But it is unfortunate that this exemplary piece of legislation has been used in the closing days of this session to pursue other agendas. The conference report includes a rider added to H.R. 1180 through stealth and political extortion which delays vital reforms of our national organ allocation system.

The one-year moratorium on the Department of Health and Human Service's Final Rule expired last month. Last week, the Administration and the appropriators, including Chairman YOUNG and Mr. OBEY, agreed to a final compromise 42-day comment period on the Final Rule's implementation.

But the defenders of UNOS and the status quo weren't satisfied. They twisted arms behind closed doors. They blocked passage of the Health Research and Quality Act of 1999 and the reauthorization of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration. They blocked enactment of critical medical education payments for children's hospitals. And they subverted the authority of the committees of jurisdiction.

Now, the compromise is being abandoned by the Republican leadership. The commitments made to the Administration and to Members have been broken in bad faith.

And what's the result? The 42 days becomes 90 days.

Mr. Speaker, enough is enough.

There is no excuse for this action. The Final Rule is the result of years of deliberation. It embodies the consensus that organs should be shared more broadly to end unjust racial and geographical disparities.

Every day of delay is another day of unconscionable 200 to 300 percent disparities in transplant and survival rates across the country—disparities which the Final Rule addresses.

Every day delays action on the Institute of Medicine's recommendation "that the Final Rule be implemented" because broader sharing "will result in more opportunities to transplant sicker patients without adversely affecting less sick patients."

And every day condones a status quo of gross racial injustice and unjust, parochial self-interest.

Mr. Speaker, the status quo is slowly killing patients who deserve to live, but are deprived of that right by a system that stacks the odds against them. But in spite of this rider, in spite of the delay and the back-room politics, reforms will come. Therefore, I urge my col-

leagues to support the Final Rule and to oppose the organ allocation rider.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the tax relief provisions which have been attached to H.R. 1180.

This tax relief package renews several temporary tax relief provisions and addresses other time sensitive tax items.

For example, we give at least one million American families relief from an increase in their alternative minimum tax that would occur when they take advantage of the child tax credit, the dependent care tax credit, or other tax credits. In addition, we renew and extend the exclusion from income for employer-provided educational assistance.

For businesses, we are extending the very valuable research and experimentation (R&E) tax credit for five years while we extend the creditor to Puerto Rico and the other U.S. territories for the first time. The R&E credit will allow U.S. companies to continue to lead the world in innovative, cutting-edge technology.

In an effort to help get Americans off government assistance and into the workplace, we are extending the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and the Welfare-to-Work Tax Credit through the end of 2001.

One item that I was particularly grateful to have included in this package is an increase in the rum excise tax cover-over to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands from the current \$10.50 per proof gallon to \$13.25 per proof gallon. I was, however, disappointed that the provision did not include language to specifically state that a portion of Puerto Rico's increase is designated for the Conservation Trust Fund of Puerto Rico.

Instead, I understand that an agreement has been reached with the Governor of Puerto Rico to provide one-sixth of the increase to the Trust Fund during the time of the increase of the cover-over (July 1, 1999 through December 31, 2001). I appreciate the support of the Governor in this endeavor. The Conservation Trust Fund, which enjoys tremendous support from the people of Puerto Rico, plays an important role in the preservation of the natural resources of the island for the benefit of her future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the efforts of our Chairman, BILL ARCHER, in putting together this tax relief package and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the tax extender and Ticket to Work package. I commend the Chairman and my colleagues RICK LAZIO of New York and KENNY HULSHOF of Missouri for their leadership on this issue.

So many people with disabilities want to work, and technological as well as medical advances now make it possible for many of them to do so. Unfortunately, the current Social Security Disability program has an inherent number of obstacles and disincentives for people to leave the rolls and seek gainful employment because they will lose cash and critical Medicare benefits.

This proposal before us today is designed to eliminate those obstacles and allow beneficiaries to select from a wider choice of rehabilitation and support services. It also extends health benefits for disabled people returning to work, which has been one of the single biggest challenges for helping people to make this transition.

Specifically, it expands state options under the Medicaid program for workers with disabilities, and it extends Medicare coverage for SSDI beneficiaries.

Importantly, this bill not only will well serve the disabled, and also will save millions of Social Security dollars in the coming years. The key to this bill is that it will provide people with the opportunities and means they have asked us for to become productive members of society. This is a good and fiscally responsible bill.

I'd also like to express my support for the important package of tax extenders contained in this legislation. These extenders—like the R&D tax credit and others—are essential elements in our effort to maintain our strong economy.

I urge my colleagues to support this responsible package.

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the inclusion of the provision that stops the Department of Health and Human Services from improving the system of organ allocation in this country. The organ provision was only thrown into this bill at the last minute, and it has no place in this bill.

The current system for organ sharing is not fair and needs to be improved. Organ sharing is a matter of life and death. The problem is that every year people die unnecessarily because the current organ allocation system is broken. We can do better and I urge my colleagues not to let parochial interests get in the way of fixing the problem.

Whether or not you get the organ that will save your life should not depend on where you live. Organs do not and should not belong to any geographical or political entity. But, under the current system, depending on where the organ was harvested, it could be given to someone with years to live—while someone in the next town across the wrong border may die waiting for a transplant.

The most difficult organ to transplant is the liver. Pioneered at the University of Pittsburgh, upwards of 90% of all the liver transplant surgeons today were either trained at Pittsburgh or by doctors who were trained there. Yet facilities like Pittsburgh, Mt. Sinai, Cedars-Sinai, Stanford and other highly regarded transplant centers which take on the most difficult and riskiest transplant patients are struggling with the longest waiting times in the country.

While these centers are highly regarded, many of their patients do not come to them because of their reputations. The fact is that many of their patients only seek them out after having been turned down by their local transplant centers. There is strong evidence to suggest that many smaller transplant centers avoid the riskier transplants on the sicker patients because they are more difficult and would adversely impact their reputations should they not be successful.

This isn't right. Whether you live or die should not depend on where you live.

This debate is not about pitting big transplant centers against small ones, or about pitting one region against another. It is about making sure that the

gift of life goes to the person who needs it the most rather than someone who happens to have the good fortune to live in the right state, county or city. Its about helping at least 300 people each year to continue to live.

The fact is that the current system discriminates against people who live near the highly regarded centers with the longer waiting lists. It's not their fault that their local center is willing to take the harder and sicker patients when other centers avoid the sicker patients in favor of patients who may be still able to work, go to school, or even play golf while patients elsewhere are near death without any opportunity to receive that organ because they have the misfortune of being on the wrong side of the Pennsylvania—Ohio line.

All HHS wants to do is: (1) require UNOS to develop policies that would standardize its criteria for listing patients and for determining their medical status, and (2) ensure that medical urgency, not geography, is the main determinant for allocating organs.

HHS should be allowed to proceed. The longer we delay the more lives are at risk. In this day of modern air travel and communications there is no good reason for an organ to stop at the border. There is no good reason why if I passed away while attending the Superbowl in New Orleans that my liver should go to a golfer in Louisiana when I may have a loved one who is in desperate need of a transplant at home.

People are dying because they happen to live in the wrong zip code and because states do not want to share their organs. Nowhere else in society would we allow a monopoly like this to continue. We must put an end to this craziness. There is no room in this country for politics to affect who lives and dies. The patients who need the organs the most should get them. Period.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

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

Mr. ARCHER. 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 418, nays 2, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 611]

YEAS—418

Abercrombie	Baldwin	Bentsen
Ackerman	Ballenger	Bereuter
Aderholt	Barcia	Berkley
Allen	Barr	Berman
Andrews	Barrett (NE)	Biggart
Archer	Barrett (WI)	Bilbray
Armey	Bartlett	Bilirakis
Baca	Barton	Bishop
Bachus	Bass	Blagojevich
Baird	Bateman	Bliley
Baldacci	Becerra	Blumenauer

Blunt	Gibbons	Luther
Boehlert	Gilchrest	Maloney (CT)
Boehner	Gillmor	Maloney (NY)
Bonilla	Gilman	Manzullo
Bonior	Gonzalez	Markey
Bono	Goode	Martinez
Borski	Goodlatte	Mascara
Boswell	Goodling	Matsui
Boucher	Gordon	McCarthy (MO)
Boyd	Goss	McCarthy (NY)
Brady (PA)	Graham	McCollum
Brown (FL)	Granger	McCrery
Brown (OH)	Green (TX)	McDermott
Bryant	Green (WI)	McGovern
Burr	Greenwood	Mica
Burton	Gutierrez	McInnis
Buyer	Gutknecht	McIntyre
Calvert	Hall (OH)	McKeon
Camp	Hall (TX)	McKinney
Campbell	Hansen	McNulty
Canady	Hastert	Meehan
Cannon	Hastings (FL)	Meek (FL)
Capuano	Hastings (WA)	Meeks (NY)
Cardin	Hayes	Menendez
Carson	Hayworth	Metcalf
Castle	Hefley	Mica
Chabot	Herger	Millender-
Chambliss	Hill (IN)	McDonald
Chenoweth-Hage	Hill (MT)	Miller (FL)
Clay	Hilleary	Miller, Gary
Clayton	Hilliard	Miller, George
Clement	Hinchey	Minge
Clyburn	Hinojosa	Mink
Coble	Hobson	Moakley
Coburn	Hoefl	Mollohan
Collins	Hoekstra	Moore
Combest	Holden	Moran (KS)
Condit	Holt	Moran (VA)
Cook	Hooley	Morella
Cooksey	Horn	Murtha
Costello	Hostettler	Myrick
Cox	Houghton	Nadler
Coyne	Hoyer	Napolitano
Cramer	Hulshof	Neal
Crane	Hunter	Ney
Crowley	Hutchinson	Northup
Cubin	Hyde	Norwood
Cummings	Inslee	Nussle
Cunningham	Isakson	Oberstar
Danner	Istook	Obey
Davis (FL)	Jackson (IL)	Olver
Davis (IL)	Jackson-Lee	Ortiz
Davis (VA)	(TX)	Ose
Deal	Jefferson	Owens
DeFazio	Jenkins	Oxley
DeGette	John	Packard
Delahunt	Johnson (CT)	Pallone
DeLauro	Johnson, E. B.	Pascarell
DeLay	Johnson, Sam	Pastor
DeMint	Jones (NC)	Paul
Deutsch	Jones (OH)	Payne
Diaz-Balart	Kanjorski	Pease
Dickey	Kaptur	Pelosi
Dicks	Kasich	Peterson (MN)
Dingell	Kelly	Peterson (PA)
Dixon	Kennedy	Petri
Doggett	Kildee	Phelps
Dooley	Kilpatrick	Pickering
Doolittle	Kind (WI)	Pickett
Doyle	King (NY)	Pitts
Dreier	Kingston	Pombo
Duncan	Klecza	Pomeroy
Dunn	Klink	Porter
Edwards	Knollenberg	Portman
Ehlers	Kolbe	Price (NC)
Ehrlich	Kucinich	Pryce (OH)
Emerson	Kuykendall	Quinn
Engel	LaFalce	Rahall
English	LaHood	Ramstad
Eshoo	Lampson	Rangel
Etheridge	Lantos	Regula
Evans	Largent	Reyes
Ewing	Larson	Reynolds
Farr	Latham	Riley
Fattah	LaTourette	Rivers
Filner	Lazio	Rodriguez
Foley	Leach	Roemer
Forbes	Lee	Rogan
Ford	Levin	Rogers
Fossella	Lewis (CA)	Rohrabacher
Fowler	Lewis (GA)	Ros-Lehtinen
Franks (NJ)	Lewis (KY)	Rothman
Frelinghuysen	Linder	Roukema
Frost	Lipinski	Roybal-Allard
Galleghy	LoBiondo	Royce
Ganske	Lofgren	Rush
Gedensson	Lowey	Ryan (WI)
Gekas	Lucas (KY)	Ryun (KS)
Gephardt	Lucas (OK)	Sabo

Salmon	Souder	Turner
Sanchez	Spence	Udall (CO)
Sanders	Spratt	Udall (NM)
Sandlin	Stabenow	Upton
Sanford	Stearns	Velazquez
Sawyer	Stenholm	Vento
Saxton	Strickland	Visclosky
Scarborough	Stump	Vitter
Schaffer	Stupak	Walden
Schakowsky	Sununu	Walsh
Scott	Sweeney	Wamp
Sensenbrenner	Talent	Waters
Sessions	Tancredo	Watkins
Shadegg	Tanner	Watt (NC)
Shaw	Tauscher	Watts (OK)
Shays	Tauzin	Waxman
Sherman	Taylor (MS)	Weiner
Sherwood	Taylor (NC)	Weldon (FL)
Shimkus	Terry	Weldon (PA)
Shows	Thomas	Weller
Simpson	Thompson (CA)	Weygand
Sisisky	Thompson (MS)	Whitfield
Skeen	Thornberry	Wicker
Skelton	Thune	Wise
Slaughter	Thurman	Wolf
Smith (MI)	Tiahrt	Woolsey
Smith (NJ)	Tierney	Wu
Smith (TX)	Toomey	Wynn
Smith (WA)	Towns	Young (AK)
Snyder	Trafiact	Young (FL)

NAYS—2

Berry

Stark

NOT VOTING—15

Baker	Everett	Radanovich
Brady (TX)	Fletcher	Serrano
Callahan	Frank (MA)	Shuster
Capps	McIntosh	Wexler
Conyers	Nethercutt	Wilson

□ 1903

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

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, due to a family illness I was unable to attend votes today. Had I been here I would have made the following votes:

Rollcall No. 598—"no"; 599—"yes"; 600—"yes"; 601—"yes"; 602—"yes"; 603—"no"; 604—"no"; 605—"no"; 606—"no"; 607—"yes"; 608—"no"; 609—"yes"; 610—"yes"; 611—"yes".

PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE—RETURNING TO THE SENATE S. 4, SOLDIERS', SAILORS', AIRMEN'S, AND MARINES' BILL OF RIGHTS ACT OF 1999

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to a question of the privileges of the House, and I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 393) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 393

Resolved, That the bill of the Senate (S. 4) entitled the "Soldiers', Sailors', Airmen's, and Marines' Bill of Rights Act of 1999", in the opinion of this House, contravenes the first clause of the seventh section of the first article of the Constitution of the United