

NAYS—1

Paul

NOT VOTING—43

Bliley	Jefferson	Roybal-Allard
Chambliss	Jones (OH)	Royce
Coburn	Leach	Salmon
Condit	Markey	Sanchez
Cook	McCollum	Skeltton
Cooksey	McIntosh	Smith (MI)
Costello	McNulty	Sweeney
Doyle	Meek (FL)	Tauzin
English	Menendez	Taylor (MS)
Ford	Norwood	Udall (NM)
Franks (NJ)	Pascrell	Vento
Greenwood	Pastor	Vitter
Hilleary	Payne	Waxman
Hilliard	Pitts	
Houghton	Roukema	

1845

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall votes Nos. 234, 235, 236, and 237, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on all four votes.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 4006

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 4006.

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

There was no objection.

FREEDOM TO E-FILE ACT

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 777) to require the Department of Agriculture to establish an electronic filing and retrieval system to enable the public to file all required paperwork electronically with the Department and to have access to public information on farm programs, quarterly trade, economic, and production reports, and other similar information, with a Senate amendment to the House amendments thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The Clerk read the Senate amendment to the House amendments, as follows:

Senate amendment to House amendments:
In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the House amendment to the text of the bill, insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Freedom to E-File Act".

SEC. 2. ELECTRONIC FILING AND RETRIEVAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, in accordance with subsection (c), the Secretary of Agriculture (referred to in this Act as the "Sec-

retary") shall, to the maximum extent practicable, establish an Internet-based system that enables agricultural producers to access all forms of the agencies of the Department of Agriculture (referred to in this Act as the "Department") specified in subsection (b).

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The agencies referred to in subsection (a) are the following:

(1) The Farm Service Agency.
(2) The Natural Resources Conservation Service.

(3) The rural development components of the Department included in the Secretary's service center initiative regarding State and field office collocation implemented pursuant to section 215 of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6915).

(4) The agricultural producer programs component of the Commodity Credit Corporation administered by the Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) provide a method by which agricultural producers may—

(A) download from the Internet the forms of the agencies specified in subsection (b); and

(B) submit completed forms via electronic facsimile, mail, or similar means;

(2) redesign the forms by incorporating into the forms user-friendly formats and self-help guidance materials; and

(3) ensure that the agencies specified in subsection (b)—

(A) use computer hardware and software that is compatible among the agencies and will operate in a common computing environment; and

(B) develop common Internet user-interface locations and applications to consolidate the agencies' news, information, and program materials.

(d) PROGRESS REPORTS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that describes the progress made toward implementing the Internet-based system required under this section.

SEC. 3. ACCESSING INFORMATION AND FILING OVER THE INTERNET.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, in accordance with subsection (b), the Secretary shall expand implementation of the Internet-based system established under section 2 by enabling agricultural producers to access and file all forms and, at the option of the Secretary, selected records and information of the agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b).

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall ensure that an agricultural producer is able—

(1) to file electronically or in paper form, at the option of the agricultural producer, all forms required by agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b);

(2) to file electronically or in paper form, at the option of the agricultural producer, all documentation required by agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b) and determined appropriate by the Secretary; and

(3) to access information of the Department concerning farm programs, quarterly trade, economic, and production reports, and other similar production agriculture information that is readily available to the public in paper form.

SEC. 4. AVAILABILITY OF AGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FUNDS.

(a) RESERVATION OF FUNDS.—From funds made available for agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b) for information technology or information resource management, the Secretary shall reserve from those agencies' applicable accounts a total amount equal to not more than the following:

(1) For fiscal year 2001, \$3,000,000.

(2) For each subsequent fiscal year, \$2,000,000.

(b) TIME FOR RESERVATION.—The Secretary shall notify Congress of the amount to be re-

served under subsection (a) for a fiscal year not later than December 1 of that fiscal year.

(c) USE OF FUNDS.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Funds reserved under subsection (a) shall be used to establish the Internet-based system required under section 2 and to expand the system as required by section 3.

(2) MAINTENANCE.—Once the system is established and operational, reserved amounts shall be used for maintenance and improvement of the system.

(d) RETURN OF FUNDS.—Funds reserved under subsection (a) and unobligated at the end of the fiscal year shall be returned to the agency from which the funds were reserved, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 5. FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION AND RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than December 1, 2000, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation and the Risk Management Agency shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a plan, that is consistent with this Act, to allow agricultural producers to—

(1) obtain, over the Internet, from approved insurance providers all forms and other information concerning the program under the jurisdiction of the Corporation and Agency in which the agricultural producer is a participant; and

(2) file electronically all paperwork required for participation in the program.

(b) ADMINISTRATION.—The plan shall—

(1) conform to sections 2(c) and 3(b); and

(2) prescribe—

(A) the location and type of data to be made available to agricultural producers;

(B) the location where agricultural producers can electronically file their paperwork; and

(C) the responsibilities of the applicable parties, including agricultural producers, the Risk Management Agency, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, approved insurance providers, crop insurance agents, and brokers.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than December 1, 2001, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation and the Risk Management Agency shall complete implementation of the plan submitted under subsection (a).

SEC. 6. CONFIDENTIALITY.

In carrying out this Act, the Secretary—

(1) may not make available any information over the Internet that would otherwise not be available for release under section 552 or 552a of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) shall ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that the confidentiality of persons is maintained.

Mr. LAHOOD (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate amendment to the House amendments be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the House in concurring with the Senate amendment and passing S. 777, otherwise known as, the Freedom to E-File bill.

I have long been a proponent of initiatives at USDA to provide better service to farmers and ranchers through streamlining and the use of new technologies, while at the same time saving taxpayer dollars.

Growing numbers of farmers and ranchers are using home computers. This fact, coupled with budget demands, is putting enormous pressure on USDA's field service employees. It is therefore imperative that USDA take advantage of the internet for the efficiencies it

can offer. Doing so will benefit overworked field service staff, save taxpayer dollars, and allow farmers and ranchers to spend more time on their operations and less time visiting USDA offices.

For these reasons, I believe USDA must improve electronic access to its programs and services. Consequently, I support S. 777, the Freedom to E-File bill.

While I support the goals of this bill, I would prefer a more comprehensive look at USDA reorganization and modernization. Unfortunately, it appears that changes at USDA are only going to be made on an incremental basis.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

There was no objection.

The motion to reconsider is laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on S. 777.

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

There was no objection.

AUTHORIZING PRESIDENT TO AWARD GOLD MEDAL ON BEHALF OF CONGRESS TO CHARLES M. SCHULZ

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 3642) to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to Charles M. Schulz in recognition of his lasting artistic contributions to the Nation and the world, with Senate amendments thereto, and concur in the Senate amendments.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Clerk read the Senate amendments, as follows:

Senate amendments:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Charles M. Schulz was born on November 26, 1922, in St. Paul, Minnesota, the son of Carl and Dena Schulz.

(2) Charles M. Schulz served his country in World War II, working his way up from infantryman to staff sergeant and eventually leading a machine gun squad. He kept morale high by decorating fellow soldiers' letters home with cartoons of barracks life.

(3) After returning from the war, Charles M. Schulz returned to his love for illustration, and took a job with "Timeless Topix". He also took a second job as an art instructor. Eventually, his hard work paid off when the Saturday Evening Post began purchasing a number of his single comic panels.

(4) It was in his first weekly comic strip, "L'il Folks", that Charlie Brown was born. That comic strip, which was eventually renamed "Peanuts", became the sole focus of Charles M. Schulz's career.

(5) Charles M. Schulz drew every frame of the "Peanuts" strip, which ran 7 days a week, since it was created in October 1950. This is rare dedication in the field of comic illustration.

(6) The "Peanuts" comic strip appeared in 2,600 newspapers around the world daily until January 3, 2000, and on Sundays until February 13, 2000, and reached approximately 335,000,000 readers every day in 20 different languages, making Charles M. Schulz the most successful comic illustrator in the world.

(7) Charles M. Schulz's television special, "A Charlie Brown Christmas", has run for 34 consecutive years. In all, more than 60 animated specials have been created based on "Peanuts" characters. Four feature films, 1,400 books, and a hit Broadway musical about the "Peanuts" characters have also been produced.

(8) Charles M. Schulz was a leader in the field of comic illustration and in his community. He paved the way for other artists in this field over the last 50 years and continues to be praised for his outstanding achievements.

(9) Charles M. Schulz gave back to his community in many ways, including owning and operating Redwood Empire Ice Arena in Santa Rosa, California. The arena has become a favorite gathering spot for people of all ages. Charles M. Schulz also financed a yearly ice show that drew crowds from all over the San Francisco Bay Area.

(10) Charles M. Schulz gave the Nation a unique sense of optimism, purpose, and pride. Whether through the Great Pumpkin Patch, the Kite Eating Tree, Lucy's Psychiatric Help Stand, or Snoopy's adventures with the Red Baron, "Peanuts" embodied human vulnerabilities, emotions, and potential.

(11) Charles M. Schulz's lifetime of work linked generations of Americans and became a part of the fabric of our national culture.

SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The President is authorized to award posthumously, on behalf of the Congress, a gold medal of appropriate design to Charles M. Schulz in recognition of his lasting artistic contributions to the Nation and the world.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purpose of the award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (hereafter in this Act referred to as the "Secretary") shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.

SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

Under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under section 2 at a price sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, and the cost of the gold medal.

SEC. 4. NATIONAL MEDALS.

The medals struck under this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

SEC. 5. FUNDING AND PROCEEDS OF SALE.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund an amount not to exceed \$30,000 to pay for the cost of the medals authorized by this Act.

(b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals under section 3 shall be deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.

Amend the title so as to read: "An Act to authorize the President to award posthumously a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to Charles M. Schulz in recognition of his lasting artistic contributions to the Nation and the world, and for other purposes."

Mr. LEACH (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate amendments be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

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

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3642.

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

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF ASSISTANT OF HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Michelle Giannetta, Staff Assistant of the Honorable GEORGE RADANOVICH, Member of Congress:

May 26, 2000.

Hon. DENNIS J. HASTERT,

Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena for testimony and documents issued by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California.

Afer consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

MICHELLE GIANNETTA,
Staff Assistant.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

DISTURBING TRENDS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about some disturbing trends in the Middle East. I admire enormously the commitment of Prime Minister Barak of Israel to try to find a peaceful solution to many of the disputes that have troubled the region. I believe historically the record is very clear that Israel sought it first to live in peace with its neighbors. It was forced to resort to armed conflict to defend itself.

Prime Minister Barak to his credit has been willing now after 50 years and