

about those, and each of us try to deal with it in different ways, whether it is bringing our families here; whether it is trying to travel with them, I use my frequent flier miles to try to bring my kids with me to different hearings and different events; trying to call home each night; trying to e-mail, when I can remember my quick-dot-name, my handle; whether it is losing video games to your kids at home on a regular basis, I do not think I have ever won, unless I do not play fair.

It is something that they need that time, and it is something we struggle with. But it is a balance of setting an example. But then when you set the example, or when you try to inspire your kids, you also have an extra responsibility, as many of us do in this House, to reach out to our children, because if we lose our family and gain the world, we have lost everything. It is very easy to do that here, and if we are going to pass resolutions like this, we have to get our own house in order first and be an example, because the people who watch us in our home towns and the people who watch us around the country say, "Well, look at them. They will pass a resolution in Congress, but what are they doing with their own families?"

We have tried to address some of the policy questions that were raised too, whether it is in welfare reform and the accountability of child support, because at the very minimum, the kids deserve the financial support when a dad abandons.

We also tried to address child abuse. It is so hard for me to understand any father who could physically or sexually or verbally abuse their children. You talk about an anathema, how could a dad who loves their kids beat their kids? I just do not understand that, and it is something we are wrestling with in our society.

We praise all the moms who stood in for the dads that have abandoned their kids. We praise all the coaches, all the mentors, all the volunteers in this country who stepped up and stood in the gap when the dad abandons their families.

But the purpose of this resolution is to say that the men of America, the dads in America, need to stand up. If you are not home, get home, and get involved in your kids' life. If you are there, as much as possible, do not just go off into your basketball leagues and your bowling leagues and out to golf and go out with your friends. Spend time with your kids. You will regret it the rest of your life if you do not, and the country has to pay the consequence.

Mr. GOODLING. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 522 offered by my colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. PITTS. House Resolution 522 expresses the importance of fathers in the rearing and development of their children. This resolution enjoys bipartisan support, including both the Republican and Democrat leadership and I am pleased to have the opportunity this afternoon to speak on behalf of it.

This resolution is timely. Yesterday, we celebrated Father's Day, a holiday that was started in 1910 in Spokane, Washington by Sonora Louise Smart Dodd. Ms. Dodd wanted to honor and thank her father for raising her and her five siblings after her mother died in childbirth.

It was recognized nationally in 1972 by President Nixon to honor the significant role fathers play in the upbringing of their children.

Although families across the country just recognized and honored fathers, we should be concerned about the fact that the United States is the world's leader in fatherless families. In fact, it is estimated that half of all United States children born today will spend at least half of their childhood in a family in which the father is absent.

Madam Speaker, every child has a father, but not every child has a dad and the consequences of not having father figures are disheartening. Studies have shown that children who are reared by a single parent are less likely to complete high school, earn less, and have lower employment stability than children reared in two-parent families.

In a study of juveniles in state reform institutions, it was found that 70 percent of such juveniles grew up in single or no parent homes. Additionally, it has been found that in high-crime, inner-city neighborhoods, well over 90 percent of children from safe, stable, two-parent homes do not become delinquent.

Madam Speaker, those examples serve to illustrate my strong belief that nothing can replace the father in a child's life. Fathers are role models and offer their children the most important ingredients that they should have throughout their childhood: love, guidance, discipline, encouragement, experience, trust and faith.

This resolution rightly recognizes that the creation of a better America depends in large part on the active involvement of fathers in the rearing and development of their children.

H. Res. 522 urges each father in America to accept his full share of responsibility for the lives of his children, to be actively involved in rearing his children, and to encourage the academic, moral and spiritual development of his children.

I commend the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his leadership in authoring this resolution and urge my colleagues to adopt this measure.

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, today I rise as a cosponsor and supporter of H. Res. 522. I commend the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. PITTS on this fine piece of legislation.

This past weekend, I was fortunate to be recognized for my work by the most important people in America. I was not recognized by some organization for my work as a Congressman, but by my children for my work as their father. My role as a father is the most important role in my life. This past weekend families all over the country celebrated Father's Day, and recognized their fathers for all the hard work and love and encouragement they provide.

Today, we here in Washington wish to say thank you to all of the fathers who work every day to instill good values in their children. We wish to say thank you to all of the fathers who make sure their children finish their homework before they go outside to play with their friends. We wish to say thank you for making

your children eat all of those green vegetables before they have those Oreo cookies. We wish to say thank you for having the patience to teach your children how to catch a baseball, ride a bicycle, say no to drugs, and drive a car responsibly. I know it is not always easy to be the guy who has to be in all of these places at once, but you all have such an important role to your children and our society.

Finally, I want to say thank you to my father. I remember growing up in Eufala, Oklahoma when my father worked three jobs to keep food on the table. He still had the time to instill in me the values that have made me the man I am today. Thank you Daddy.

Today I urge all my colleagues to support this piece legislation, and send thanks to all of our responsible fathers across this great nation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res 522.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□

SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING MONEY LAUNDERING

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 495) expressing the sense of the House regarding support for the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, and the timely and public identification of non-cooperative jurisdictions in the fight against international money laundering.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 495

Whereas the International Monetary Fund has estimated the amount of international money laundering to be at least \$600,000,000,000 annually representing 2 to 5 percent of the world's gross domestic product;

Whereas money laundering is a crucial adjunct to the underlying crimes that generate money, including drug trafficking, kidnapping, murder, international terrorism, and other forms of violent crime;

Whereas money laundering and foreign corruption facilitate each other, undermining the efforts of the United States to promote democratic institutions and economic development around the world;

Whereas, in today's open and global financial markets, which are characterized by a high mobility of funds and the rapid development of new payment technologies, the tools for laundering the proceeds of serious crimes have become more sophisticated and readily available;

Whereas recent years have witnessed a sharp increase in the number of jurisdictions offering financial services without appropriate controls or regulation and which are protected by strict banking secrecy legislation which facilitates the anonymous protection for illegal assets in certain countries or territories making them even more attractive for money laundering;

Whereas the proliferation of such non-cooperative countries or territories which do not, or only marginally, participate in international cooperation against financial crime, also exacerbates competition between these centers and so contributes to worsen existing practices and makes more difficult the maintenance of anti-money laundering standards in other countries;

Whereas, in order to ensure the stability of the international financial system and effective prevention of money laundering, all financial centers in the world should have comprehensive control, regulation, and supervision systems, and that all financial intermediaries and agents be subject to strict obligations, notably as regards the prevention, detection, and punishment of money laundering;

Whereas the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF), of which the United States is a founding member, was established for the purpose of developing and promoting policies to combat international money laundering;

Whereas the FATF, consisting of 26 jurisdictions including the United States and 2 international organizations, originally issued in 1990 and revised in 1996 40 recommendations designed for universal application that set out the basic framework for antimoney laundering efforts covering the criminal justice system and law enforcement, the financial system and its regulation, and international cooperation;

Whereas the FATF has determined the criteria for defining noncooperative countries or territories consistent with the 40 recommendations, and FATF members have agreed on a process for identifying non-cooperative jurisdictions to include all countries and territories, both inside and outside FATF membership, whose detrimental practices seriously and unjustifiably hamper the fight against international money laundering;

Whereas the FATF has reported that the list of noncooperative countries or territories should include several subcategories of noncooperative countries or territories which could be as follows: clearly non-cooperative with severe deficiencies in many areas, partly noncooperative with impediments in various areas, and de facto non-cooperative with no significant impediments in laws and regulations but ineffective regime in practice; and

Whereas the FATF is gathering and analyzing all relevant information necessary for the publication of lists of noncooperative jurisdictions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House that—

(1) the United States should continue to actively and publicly support the objectives of the FATF with regard to combating international money laundering;

(2) the FATF should identify noncooperative jurisdictions in as expeditious a manner as possible and publicly release a list directly naming those jurisdictions identified;

(3) the United States should support the public release of the list naming noncooperative jurisdictions identified by the FATF;

(4) the United States should encourage the adoption of the necessary international action to encourage compliance by the identified noncooperative jurisdictions; and

(5) the United States should take the necessary countermeasures to protect the United States economy against money of unlawful origin and encourage other nations to do the same.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA) and the

gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA).

(Mrs. ROUKEMA asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, today we want to address the very serious issue of international money laundering and put the House on clear record in support of efforts by the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering.

Madam Speaker, money laundering is the process by which organized crime and the drug cartels take their ill-gotten gains, namely cash, and move it back into the economy under their own names. The IMF has estimated that internationally over \$600 billion is laundered annually. That is a huge problem, it is an illegal problem, and one can only imagine the effect it has on the economy in various parts of the world.

The good news here is that an international organization, namely the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, of which the United States is a member, has been working on this serious and growing problem for some time. In 1990, the FATF issued a list of 40 anti-money laundering standards. The 40 standards are recognized today as being the international standard which should be followed by all countries.

More recently, FATF undertook a systematic review of the compliance by jurisdiction with the FATF 40. This process is commonly named and referred to as "name and shame," a process, and it is nearly complete. Later this month, FATF will identify those jurisdictions which they have determined do not comply with the FATF 40.

I believe it is extremely important that FATF proceed as planned and publicly identify those jurisdictions which are not in compliance. As many have said before, "sunlight is the best disinfectant." That is exactly the procedure that we should be supporting and following here with this resolution. The prompt and public identification of non-compliant jurisdictions will put pressure on the jurisdictions to meet the international standards on anti-money laundering and to initiate retaliatory actions from other countries that are also in compliance.

I would note that the FATF "name and shame" process has already produced results. Austria, which is a member of FATF, just announced that it will eliminate, and by "just renounced," the report was last Friday in the Wall Street Journal, that it will eliminate anonymous savings accounts. As the Journal reported, there are over 20 million anonymous accounts, more than three for each man, woman and child in Austria. These ac-

counts hold an estimated \$100 billion. The FATF and money laundering experts had identified the anonymous Austrian savings accounts as posing significant money laundering problems. Austria's action, which came only after it became clear, and I went to stress that, that action and compliance only came after it became clear that the FATF would name Austria, shows that the "name and shame" project can be effective. Austria will then be in compliance with the international standards.

Another benefit from the FATF announcements is that our U.S. banks and securities firms will be on notice regarding what jurisdictions should be avoided and our regulators will be focused on those jurisdictions.

Madame Chairman, this resolution represents a significant step in direction of serious action to fight money laundering crimes.

This Congress needs to do more on the subject of money laundering. This week Mr. MCCOLLUM and I will be introducing a comprehensive money laundering proposal similar to the Administration's bill from last November. This bill will address major problems such as (1) bulk cash smuggling, (2) currency couriers, and (3) sanctions against money launderers.

These, and other, money laundering issues should be addressed this Congress.

Madam Chairman, as wonderful as this particular proposal is, and I would like to reserve time at the end here to add something more, I would say that as strongly as I support this effort, and it is an essential action that this Congress must take today, there is much more to be done that must be done, and I would hope that this is the first step in a concerted, focused effort for this Congress to continue down the anti-money laundering path.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. Of the many public policy challenges facing lawmakers, facing the law enforcement community and facing regulators, I do not know that any represents as significant a threat to our financial system as money laundering does.

The wholesale cleansing of illegitimate profits derived from criminal activities reaches staggering proportions, by some estimates between \$100 and \$300 billion in the United States alone, and nearly \$600 billion, that is over one-half trillion, worldwide per year.

According to the IMF, this figure represents from 2 to 5 percent of the entire world's gross domestic product. So in this context, the resolution of the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA) expresses the support of the House of Representatives for the actions about to be taken by what is known as the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering.

That task force is composed of 26 member nations, including the United States, the European Commission, the Gulf Cooperation Council, et cetera. It was formed by the G-7 economic summit of 1989, and the task force was set up to address the global problem of money laundering. This week, on June 22, the task force will "name and shame," if you will, non-compliant jurisdictions, both inside and outside the task force's membership.

□ 1530

The purpose of naming these jurisdictions is to highlight their lack of cooperation in the fight against money laundering.

The resolution follows the recent approval by the Committee on Banking of the Clinton administration antimoney laundering proposal which passed our committee on June 8 with very broad bipartisan support; in fact, almost unanimously. I am hopeful that the bill will soon come before our full House so that we can pass it and can provide the Treasury Secretary with well-targeted discretionary tools to address discrete problems in recognized money laundering offshore havens.

I should note that the identical language from today's resolution was included in the administration's legislation for which we can credit the efforts of our distinguished colleague, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA). I supported the resolution in the Committee on Banking, and I support it today on the House floor.

Madam Speaker, we must not lose sight of the continuing challenges we face in the fight against money launderers who represent a very fast-moving and remarkably adaptable class of criminals. The global gross of electronic commerce and banking and the unprecedented expansion of global commerce in general, renders our financial system more vulnerable to misuse and abuse.

I therefore urge my colleagues to join us in sending a very clear message to noncooperative offshore jurisdictions that the House is paying close attention to the task force's work and supports every effort to bring more accountability to bear on those who would facilitate money laundering.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), a leading advocate of this legislation and a leader on all Committee on Banking and Financial Services issues.

(Mr. BEREUTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks, and include extraneous material.)

Mr. BEREUTER. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 495, which is a sense of the House regarding support for the Financial Action Task Force, FATF, on money laundering, and in support of the timely and public identification of noncooperative juris-

dictions in the fight against international money laundering. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time, and I thank her for her initiative in introducing this resolution and for her efforts in moving the legislation.

Additional appreciation is also expressed to the distinguished gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH), the chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, and the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE) for expediting consideration of the legislation.

As a member of both the House Committee on International Relations and the Committee on Banking, this Member is committed to reducing the global pervasiveness of money laundering. According to an International Monetary Fund, IMF, estimate, as already mentioned by the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA), international money laundering is at least a \$600 billion industry, and that represents at least 2 to 5 percent of the world's annual gross domestic product.

This Member intends to focus his remarks on H. Res. 495 in four different sections today. They are as follows: The history and impetus for H. Res. 495; second, the main provisions of H. Res. 495; third, the support for H. Res. 495; and, fourth, the exigent circumstances explaining why immediate passage of H. Res. 495 is needed.

First, to illustrate the history behind the resolution, in February of this year, three of the five committees of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, including this Member and other Members of the House, met, as usual, at the headquarters of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD, and, of course, the House delegation to the NATO PA attended that meeting. A major topic of that discussion was FATF, which predominantly includes the representatives of the member States of the OECD.

As mentioned, FATF is an intergovernmental effort whose function is the development and promotion of policies to combat money laundering. The FATF currently consists of 26 countries, including the major financial center countries of Europe, North America and Asia. During the aforementioned NATO PA meeting, after the presentation of the subject of international money laundering conducted by the FATF and given by the OECD staff, and other private conversations with OECD staff and the parliamentary delegations from the other NATO countries, the U.S. House delegation became concerned whether the FATF actually would publicly name those countries which were identified in their draft report as noncooperative jurisdictions in the fight against international money laundering. There were indications that the FATF would not name names unless pressure was brought to bear in favor of the naming of non-compliant jurisdictions.

Second: provisions. As a result of that NATO PA meeting, the distin-

guished chairwoman, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA), a long-term and active member of the Economic Committee of the NATO PA, along with this Member and other Members of the House delegation, as original cosponsors, introduced this resolution which expresses the U.S. House's firm support for the public release of the names of noncooperative jurisdictions identified by the FATF. Because of the possible public release of these names, according to media reports, as mentioned by the chairman, Austria had already recently abolished its controversial anonymous bank accounts, and I am going to include that article from the June 16 edition of the Wall Street Journal.

Furthermore, the expression of the sense of the House in this resolution also states that the U.S. should encourage the adoption of the necessary international actions to encourage compliance by these identified jurisdictions. Plus, it specifies that the U.S. should put in place necessary countermeasures against money laundering and encourage other nations to do the same.

Three: the support for it. In addition to the distinguished chairwoman from New Jersey and this Member, there are seven additional cosponsors. Moreover, very similar language, as mentioned by the gentleman from New York, was successfully added by the gentlewoman, the chairman of the subcommittee, during the Committee on Banking and Financial Services' markup of H.R. 3886. That is a more comprehensive bill, which was advanced by the Committee on Banking and Financial Services on June 8 of this year.

Lastly, exigent circumstances. Due to the planned release by FATF of some type of report on this subject later this week, it is timely and essential that H. Res. 495, this sense of the House Resolution, be approved today and the results of our action conveyed to the FATF and to the OECD.

Madam Speaker, I include this article from the Wall Street Journal for the RECORD:

[From the Wall Street Journal, June 16, 2000]

AUSTRIA ESCAPES CENSURE BY ENDING SECRET ACCOUNTS

(By Michael Allen)

A week before a multilateral task force is scheduled to "name and shame" world money-laundering havens, Austria has escaped censure by agreeing to abolish its controversial anonymous bank accounts.

The 26-nation Financial Action Task Force, or FATF, the world's leading anti-money-laundering group, had warned it would expel Austria from its ranks if it didn't abolish the anonymous passbook accounts, which date to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The accounts had become a major concern for law-enforcement authorities—and a major irritant in U.S.-Austrian relations—because they offer an impenetrable way to disguise the source and ownership of criminal proceeds.

Passbook accounts could be used by anyone who knew the coded number and possessed the book, meaning they could be opened by one person, then traded on the

Internet to someone else, who could then use them for any number of illegal purposes in complete secrecy—and even access the funds from ATMs around the world.

"Anonymous passbook savings accounts have been a major problem and a critical loophole in the international consensus to combat money-laundering," said Stuart Eizenstat, deputy U.S. Treasury secretary. "This victory represents a clear demonstration of FATF resolve and credibility."

Forcing Austria to either clean its own house or leave the FATF was viewed as an essential step before the organization releases a list next week of money-laundering havens, or offshore centers deemed to have inadequate laws and financial supervision. The composition of the list has been kept secret, but observers believe it will be heavily weighted with Caribbean and South Pacific island states.

Another possible candidate is Liechtenstein, which a French parliamentary report described as Europe's "most dangerous money-laundering center." The Liechtenstein government, which has already sent some leading citizens to jail, says it is trying to clean up its banking industry.

According to U.S. Treasury officials, Austria has 24 million anonymous passbook accounts, or three for every man, woman and child in the country, signifying that many of them are in the hands of foreigners. The accounts are believed to hold about \$100 billion.

The U.S. and other nations have been trying to get Austria to eliminate the accounts for a decade, but it was only in February that the threat of FATF expulsion prompted Vienna to agree to changes. Initial legislative proposals didn't appease the U.S., and the Austrian government—already under heavy diplomatic pressure because of its inclusion of the right-wing Freedom Party in the ruling coalition—quickly relented. On May 25, the financial committee of the lower house of the Austrian Parliament passed the revised bill, to go into effect this fall.

The law calls for anonymous accounts to be eliminated by June 30, 2002. In the interim, many transactions will be prohibited unless the account holder is first identified. "Austrian banks will have to make a fundamental change in the way they do business," said Mr. Eizenstat.

In a move parallel to the FATF initiative, the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development is drawing up a list of tax havens that the group believes unfairly divert tax proceeds from developed countries, through the twin lure of low taxes and strict bank secrecy. That list is expected to be released by the end of this month.

Madam Speaker, for the above stated reasons and others, this Member urges his colleagues to support H.Res. 495.

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

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to conclude by making the following observations. It should be recognized that as the ranking member, as well as the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), has already noted, the Committee on Banking and Financial Services on June 8 did report H.R. 3886, the International Counter-Money Laundering Act; and I would hope that we would be able to take action on that and perhaps even expand on it, as a matter of fact.

I also want to point out that while this resolution is a significant step in

the right direction, in addition to H.R. 3886, there is other serious action that we must take to fight money laundering crimes; and in that respect, I am fully anticipating that the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MCCOLLUM) and I will be introducing a comprehensive money laundering proposal similar to the administration's bill from last November. We have been working on this for some time, and it will supplement what H.R. 3886 does in the international arena, with a very focused effort comprehensively on domestic money laundering. Cash smuggling, currency couriers, and sanctions against the money launderers will be the major problems that we are addressing in the that bill; and it is a joint operation between the Committee on the Judiciary and members of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services. These and other money laundering issues, I hope and pray, will be addressed in this Congress; and if not completed in this Congress, and I think there is time enough to complete it in this Congress, then we will make it a top priority in the next.

However, that is for the future. For today, we are very happy to have this resolution before us, and I thank my colleagues for their cooperation and the work that we have been able to accomplish together here.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 495.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4 p.m.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 40 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 4 p.m.

□

□ 1609

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DREIER) at 4 o'clock and 9 minutes p.m.

□

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALSH. 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. 4635 and that I may include tabular and extraneous material therein.

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

There was no objection.

□

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 525 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4635.

□ 1610

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4635) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes, with Mr. PEASE in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH).

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

Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure to bring before the full House of Representatives the bill, H.R. 4635, making fiscal year 2001 appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development and independent agencies. So that we can move quickly, I will keep my comments brief.

First, let me just thank the distinguished gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) for his advice and counsel throughout this discussion. Even though we have different political persuasions, I think we share almost all of the same priorities in this bill, which makes it, as one might imagine, much less difficult to bring a bill to the floor.

We do not agree on everything obviously, but I think in most cases we do. So we have enjoyed the benefit of his advice and the staffs have worked very closely together. The subcommittee and the full committee worked very hard to bring this bill out.

Like most of the appropriations subcommittees, we were given a very tight 302(b) allocation. Nevertheless, we were able to make what I think are good policy and funding choices to produce a good, fair bill that deserves support.

Here are some of the highlights: this bill fully funds veterans medical care