

have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). The gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 274 is a structured rule that provides for the consideration of H.R. 3150, the Secure Transportation for America Act. This is a fair rule, allowing ample time for free-flowing discussion on both the base text and the Democratic substitute. The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate to be equally divided between the chairman and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. The rule makes in order only those amendments printed in the Committee on Rules report accompanying the resolution. These amendments may be offered only in the order printed in the report and may be offered only by a Member designated in the report. They shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. Further, the rule waives all points of order against such amendments. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, at this point I would like to announce that at the conclusion of the debate on this resolution, it is my intention to offer an amendment to the rule that simply replaces the manager's amendment currently made in order under the rule with a new manager's amendment. This manager's amendment eliminates a provision dealing with preferred compensation for airline employees and adds airport parking lots to a provision that requires airports receiving financial aid to work with airport restaurants, shops and other concessionaires on rent adjustments to account for their loss of revenue. The new manager's amendment also adds language that establishes a preference for the hiring of laid-off airline workers as screeners and a provision that states that, where possible, airline security companies should be American companies.

Mr. Speaker, as our Nation searches for answers in the wake of the September 11 tragedy, we find ourselves in unfamiliar territory. Our personal freedoms and liberties are so rooted in the fabric of American society that we almost take them for granted. But now

that those freedoms have been attacked in the most despicable and cowardly manner, we are all keenly aware of just how precious they are. As we strive to maintain a sense of normalcy and familiarity, we also struggle to reconcile our fears and apprehensions in a new and uncertain global atmosphere. Enhancing our Nation's air travel by making it as safe and secure as possible is critical in easing those fears among our citizens.

The comprehensive legislation before us today focuses on our Nation's aviation security system. This security plan establishes a new transportation security administration within the Department of Transportation that will be responsible for the security of all forms of transportation, not just air travel. This legislation not only expands law enforcement on aircraft by placing Federal marshals on commercial airlines, but it also positions law enforcement personnel at every airport screening location, because safety must include defenses on both the ground and in the air.

Additional ground safety measures incorporate strict new standards for screening, including certification and uniformed personnel. Federal supervision will oversee the screening process, background checks and testing. Baggage screeners will have to undergo more extensive training, adhere to tougher performance requirements, be U.S. citizens, and be deputized with law enforcement powers.

As the holiday season fast approaches, it is more important than ever that Americans are free to spend time with their families and their loved ones and it is incumbent upon us to do everything in our power to make sure that their travel, by any means, but especially by air, is as safe and as secure as possible. A stronger infrastructure means a stronger economy, and a stronger economy means a stronger America. By passing this rule and its underlying legislation, we can move quickly move forward with the important business of making our airports and airplanes safe and secure for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, as I conclude, I would like to commend the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), the chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for his hard work and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA), chairman of the Subcommittee on Aviation, for his hard work.

I urge my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying legislation.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. First, Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentleman from New York for yielding me the time.

After September 11, it is patently clear that we need to make travel on our airlines as safe as possible. Leaving aside for the time being the fact that we have not done anything for the safe-

ty of passengers on our buses, trains or ships, what we are trying to do for the flying public is as important as anything we can do to help this economy.

First, Mr. Speaker, let me speak to the rule itself.

Mr. Speaker, there were 20 Members of the House that asked that the Committee on Rules allow their amendments to be made in order. These were Members of both parties who have some thoughtful and substantive suggestions as to how to make this legislation stronger. Of those 20 Members, exactly two of them will have their amendments heard and debated by the House. The gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, is permitted to offer an amendment, and, of course, the ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), will be allowed to offer his amendment. Other than the two most senior members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, not one other Member of the House of Representatives is permitted to offer an amendment.

Candidly, Mr. Speaker, I am very disappointed. While I very much appreciate the fact that this rule makes in order the gentleman from Minnesota's substitute, the Committee on Rules spent hours this week listening to Members testify on behalf of their amendments. Unfortunately, the House at large will not have this same opportunity.

What I heard at the Committee on Rules this week was interesting, provocative, insightful and worthy of consideration by this House. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) made excellent points at the Committee on Rules which we will not consider today because of this closed rule. The gentleman from Iowa (Mr. GANSKE), the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE), the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND), the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS), the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON), the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SHADEGG) are all some of the other Members who will not have their amendments heard under this closed rule.

Why is the majority limiting debate on such an important issue? I have yet to hear one Member satisfactorily explain that to me. Worse, Mr. Speaker, the lengthy amendment from the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure chairman constantly being amended, even here in the last 30 minutes, will only be debated for 20 minutes. This is a 16-page amendment which makes significant changes to the underlying bill. So each side will have 10 minutes to debate this. I find that incredible.

Moving beyond this restrictive rule, Mr. Speaker, I would like to touch briefly on the serious deficiencies of

the underlying bill. During the minimal time allowed to debate this bill, we will hear much about who and what is screening the people and baggage on our airlines. The seminal question in my view is this: Will we have Federal law enforcement personnel screen passengers and luggage before entering airplanes or will this be left to private sector contract employees?

Before answering that question, let me ask my colleagues related questions about public safety and security, their own safety and security and their constituents'. My colleagues, do we not feel safer every morning that we enter the Capitol because we are protected by the United States Capitol Police? Do we not feel safer that our borders are protected by the United States Border Patrol and United States Customs Service? Do we not feel safer that our brave men and women in uniform and members of the United States Armed Services presently pursuing our interests in Afghanistan and elsewhere are members of the Armed Forces?

So what is my point? The point is we do not contract out our own security in the Capitol building, we do not contract out our security at our borders, and we certainly do not contract out for our military. However, the leadership of this House is comfortable contracting out the security of the flying public. Again I say, incredible.

Mr. Speaker, I remember several weeks ago after my leader the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) came out of a White House meeting with the President and said, "This is a unity government now." It seems that all 100 United States Senators understood what that meant. That means we should stop dickering around and pass a serious bill. The bill must include federalized passenger screeners at our airports. And in case it was not just made clear, the other Chamber passed their bill with federalized screeners by a recorded vote of 100-to-nothing. Certainly if the United States Senate can pass such a bill with unanimity, the House should do no less.

Another issue that really incenses me, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that our checked baggage is not screened as it should be. According to an article that appeared in yesterday's Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel, only 5 to 10 percent of checked bags are examined for explosives. The underlying bill would require examination of all checked bags by December 2003. Are we clear on this? So in 2 years and 2 months, our bags will be adequately screened.

Mr. Speaker, this is unacceptable, irresponsible and inexcusable. There is simply no reason why Congress cannot mandate the Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration to issue regulations immediately to require screening of checked baggage. I need not remind my colleagues that as the holiday season approaches, it is more critical than ever that our flying public not only feels safe but that they are safe.

□ 1330

That is the critical difference between the House bill and the unanimously passed Senate bill.

Mr. Speaker, if I had more time, I would discuss the fact that while this House has already bailed out the airline industry, provided enormous tax breaks to the largest corporations in America, and is now set to attempt to make our skies safer, we still have not lifted a single finger to help displaced workers.

I introduced a bill more than 5 weeks ago to help those hardworking Americans who have lost their jobs because of the tragedy on September 11. My bill, cosponsored by the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART) and 140 other bipartisan cosponsors, needs to be considered forthwith.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, if the previous question is defeated, I will offer an amendment to the rule; and that amendment would provide that immediately after the House passes the airline safety bill it will take up H.R. 2955, the Displaced Workers Assistance Act introduced by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) and myself and others. My amendment provides that the bill will be considered under an open amendment process so that all Members will be able to fully express their views and offer amendments that they think are important to this critical bill.

Mr. Speaker, more than 7 weeks have passed since the tragic events of September 11. Since that time, thousands and thousands of workers in the airline and related industries have lost their jobs. These people need relief immediately. When we passed the airline bailout the week after the terrorist attacks, promises were made at that time by the Republican leadership that a worker-relief package would soon follow. I do not have to say again that it has not happened yet, and I do not see any indication that it is on the schedule in the immediate future. It is time for the House to do its work and pass legislation to help these people.

Let me make clear that a "no" vote on the previous question will not stop consideration of the airline safety bill. A "no" vote will allow the House to get on with the much-delayed airline industry worker-aid bill. However, a "yes" vote on the previous question will prevent the House from taking up the airline worker relief bill.

I urge a "no" vote on the previous question.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the amendment be printed in the RECORD immediately before the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, over the past 2 months, this Congress has been working with unusual dispatch with an unusual degree of bipartisanship. The consideration of

this bill could have been another example of this. I am disappointed, as are many Members, that the leadership chose instead to have a closed, restrictive rule this afternoon and not allow Members to offer legitimate substantive and meaningful amendments.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, as my good friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), commented on the length of debate, it is apparent that we will also add 60 minutes for the rule for additional debate on this subject as we continue through the time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. REYNOLDS. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would only advise my distinguished colleague and friend that last night we asked for more time on the manager's amendment so we could have more time on this matter.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I remind the gentleman that the all-powerful Committee on Rules had the tremendous opportunity to have an hour and a half on the witness stand of the inquiries that were made by both Democrat and Republican Members as to the legislation, the manager's amendment opinions expressed by the members of the Committee on Rules on various aspects of that legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA).

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, first I want to say that this is an abundantly fair rule. It does give the minority two shots at the proposal. It does give them the opportunity to bring up in toto the Senate-passed language, as they requested.

The legislation that we have proposed on the House side, the majority side, in comments that were made by the previous speaker on the other side that it is important that we protect trains and planes and other modes of transportation, in fact the legislation that we are presenting here today is the most comprehensive security package, not only giving responsibility, which is so important, but, unlike the Senate proposal, it also gives the authority to deal with some of the problems.

In fact, today's newspaper points out one of the problems we have had in the past with security or even dealing with defects of aviation, and this is in today's Washington Post. This talks about the Value Jet crash which took place in 1996. It says: "In fact, Federal regulations were later strengthened to crack down on passenger flights carrying hazardous waste."

Why am I pointing this out? Because the Senate bill, the bill proposed by the other side, does nothing to deal with giving authority to deal with regulations relating to security. That is the

major flaw in this proposed piece of legislation.

The other side has said some 20 Members presented before the Committee on Rules. I participated in the Committee on Rules procedures. I will say many of the proposals from the other side have been incorporated into the manager's amendment. We have tried to accommodate those requests, including probably one of the strongest provisions for checked baggage, which was also pointed out by the other side that baggage is not checked.

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) on the other side, who has done such a good job in promoting this strong provision, certainly would prefer our legislative proposal, which is the strongest ever proposed anywhere in Congress and contained in our manager's amendment, and we modeled it partly after his recommendation.

So, no, good ideas have not been left out. This process has not been a partisan issue. I have worked with the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBER-STAR), the gentleman on the other side, the ranking member, and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI). We have worked together in a bipartisan fashion; and they know in their heart of hearts that the bill proposed by the majority, they agree with 100 percent, with the exception of one part, and that is, shall all of the employees who are baggage screeners be Federal employees.

What is sad about the proposal on the other side is, not only will this create a disjointed and dysfunctional security mechanism for airports, a lack of authority to deal specifically with other modes of transportation, which is so important in this time of crisis, but I have a letter from the Department of Justice, and the legislation from the other side actually will inhibit their ability to function.

The Department of Justice, let me read from their letter to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), our chairman: "Unlike the Department of Justice, DOT has both the broad transportation-related statutory mandate and nearly 35 years of significant operational experience with transportation regulation, infrastructure, security and enforcement. Further, DOT's two components of law enforcement authority, the United States Coast Guard and the Federal Aviation Administration, possess a unique infrastructure of law enforcement personnel and expertise with broad domestic enforcement authority upon which the Congress can build and enhance DOT's law enforcement authority and responsibility."

Listen to this. They say: "In light of DOT's strong capabilities and DOJ's many responsibilities in fighting the war on terrorism, we feel that our resources would be better spent in carrying out our current mission than developing a new transportation infrastructure and expertise."

So here we have the proposal from the other side, which actually will im-

pede the Department of Justice mission which they have, and it will not do it in a small way, it will do it in an incredible way.

The Congressional Budget Office submitted to me today the proposal that it is not 28,000 additional employees; it is some 31,000 additional Federal employees. So you can go home and tell your constituents what we did is created the biggest bureaucracy in the history of a generation, the biggest bureaucracy, 31,000 Federal employees, as a cure-all, and the Department of Justice has said in fact that you are interfering with our mission and they have no expertise to deal with this. We have created a two-tier system, which is the most disjointed approach to security that we could possibly have to guarantee the safety of the flying public.

So I urge my colleagues to pass the rule and to consider very carefully what legislation is before them. When all else fails, my colleagues, read the bill. This is one of the worst pieces of legislation I have seen in 20 years in working on Capitol Hill. It was sent here in a hurry, almost immediately, so we could correct it. Now we need to do that. We cannot pass this failed piece of legislation.

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

Mr. Speaker, I just remind my distinguished colleague from Florida that the Senate bill has been at the desk for an entire week, and I would also remind the gentleman that the vote in the United States Senate was 100 to nothing, and that included TRENT LOTT and JOHN McCAIN and all of the other Republican Senators who still stand by their bill.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind all Members that it is inappropriate to state how specific Senators voted on a particular measure.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST), the ranking member of the Committee on Rules.

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

Mr. Speaker, we will hear a lot of rhetoric today; but the issue before this House is a very simple one: Do you support the current system in which low-bid private security companies are responsible for airline safety? If so, then vote for the Republican leadership's bill. Or do you feel that the current system has failed the American people and should be replaced with Federal law enforcement professionals protecting our airports, just as they protect the Capitol, the White House, and America's borders? If so, then vote for the bipartisan substitute.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is an easy choice. Replacing the current failed system is simple. The White House said today that the President is eager to sign an aviation security bill into law.

Three weeks ago, the Senate unanimously passed on a vote of 100 to zero a strong bipartisan aviation security bill that we will offer as a substitute today.

This House can send that bipartisan bill to the President's desk tonight. Then we can immediately start putting more sky marshals on planes, strengthen more cockpit doors, and start protecting our airports with Federal law enforcement professionals.

On the other hand, the Republican leaders today are offering the flying public nothing more than a fig leaf that will protect the same old failed private airport security system. Even worse, Mr. Speaker, Republican leaders are offering a manager's amendment that would not just keep private security companies in charge of airport security, it would virtually exonerate them from the September 11 failures. The Republican manager's amendment would provide the private security companies with liability protection, preventing the victims of September 11 from holding them accountable for allowing terrorists to get on planes with box cutters. This is nothing less than shameful, Mr. Speaker; and I am stunned that Republican leaders are trying to slip it through the House.

Mr. Speaker, while the rest of this country pulls together to win the war on terrorism, the Republican leadership is playing politics as usual. I urge my colleagues to reject partisanship and special interest politics and to pass the bipartisan substitute so the President can immediately sign this aviation security bill.

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

Mr. Speaker, bipartisanship comes from bringing two points of view together. That is going to happen if this rule is passed when the debate will go on the merit of the legislation of the underlying bill. It will happen when a vote occurs on the manager's amendment, whether it occurs or not with passage; and it will happen with the complete Democratic substitute written by Democrats in a partisan fashion to be brought before the House in a bipartisan vote, up or down.

So we are going to have a lot of bipartisanship or nonpartisanship today, once this rule is passed. It is going to be the opportunity for those who support the President's plan to have that vote. For those who want to look at liability provisions and other aspects contained in the manager's amendment, that will be an opportunity for a vote as well. Finally, a Democratic substitute written by the Democratic minority of this House will have an up or down vote as well.

So we are going to have a lot of bipartisanship, led by the leadership in this House, let alone rank and file Members, as we pass this rule and move toward consideration of those prospects within the bill that will be before the House.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa.

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

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, about a week after September 11, I stood at ground zero with my colleague from New Jersey looking at that six-story pile of rubble and smoke rising from it that was a mass grave of 5,000 of our American citizens, and I could see superimposed over that the handwriting from a victim's relief center of a little girl, written on the wall underneath the picture of her daddy, and it said, "Daddy, I miss you. I will love you always."

□ 1345

We need to get past partisanship. There will be those on the floor today who will rant and rail against putting airport safety in the hands of government employees, as if that were an evil thing. Well, here is the real story. All those brave firefighters and policemen in New York City who lost their lives were government employees. All those courageous Capitol Hill policemen who lost their lives defending our offices 2 years ago were government employees. All those men and women in the armed services who are fighting in Afghanistan right at this moment are government employees. And the FBI agents who put their lives on the line are government employees. Those postal workers who lost their lives are government employees.

Mr. Speaker, the Oberstar-Ganske substitute is the bipartisan bill. It passed the Senate 100 to zero. Such well-known conservatives as TRENT LOTT, DON NICKLES, CHUCK GRASSLEY, all voted for that bill. They all voted for that bill.

The Senate bill puts the safety of our citizens ahead of special interests. The companies who are bankrolling the effort to kill the Senate bill are foreign-owned corporations.

So that is the question: Are we going to take common sense, practical steps to improve the safety, or are we going to entrust our lives to foreign corporations who pay minimum wage and are already threatening to sue the Government? The Ganske-Oberstar amendment empowers Attorney General John Ashcroft to set the terms and conditions of hiring and firing of those screeners, and there could be no strikes. The House leadership bill will produce gridlock. The manager's amendment is even worse. The voters have elected us to solve problems, not just to talk about them. Let us put this bill where it belongs: on the President's desk. He has already said he would sign it, and the sooner the better.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to see again a message like another one I saw at that Victims' Family Relief Center written by a mother. Underneath the picture of her husband, it said, "Dan we will love you always," signed, "Christan and your son, Justin."

It is time to pass the true bipartisan bill, get it to the President's desk, and

get it signed into law before hundreds of thousands of our citizens are flying on Thanksgiving.

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

I really wish to remind the gentleman from New York that when he said that this Oberstar measure that we will undertake was written in a partisan fashion, that the Oberstar substitute is the Senate bill that was passed 100 to nothing.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), the distinguished minority whip.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose the previous question, and I do so for a very simple reason that was eloquently brought to us on the floor by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS).

Airline workers have been laid off across this country by the tens of thousands; and so far, we have done absolutely nothing. We were told when this Congress bailed out the airline industry to the tune of \$15 billion a few weeks ago that the workers would be next. On top of that, today they have something called uncapped compensation for some of these executives that would give them additional millions of dollars that was in the manager's amendment. I do not know if they are going to go forward with it and try to get it out of here today, but I tell my colleagues one thing, they had it in there originally. They are taking care of certain people and letting the others go.

We decided that we were in this together as a country, workers, executives, Democrats, Republicans. Well, that has not been the case. After they did this bailout of the airline industry, the House passed this corporate welfare package under the guise of economic stimulus. Multinational corporations received tax breaks to the tune of billions of dollars, individual companies, \$2 billion, \$1.5 billion. Airline workers were given the pink slip.

Mr. Speaker, 150,000 airline workers, baggage handlers, machinists, flight attendants, pilots, mechanics, are out of work. They need unemployment compensation. About 40 percent of people get it today if you are thrown out of work in this country. That is an outrage. They are not getting it. They need health care benefits to make sure that their families have health care, that they can feed their families, pay their mortgage with unemployment compensation benefits. All of that has run out or will run out without any help from this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to lend these workers a hand. How much time needs to go by? How many more bailouts and tax breaks will we need to consider before we help these 150,000 airline workers whose livelihoods have been most affected, and all of the other tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands who have been laid off as a result of their layoffs?

Mr. Speaker, we need to pass an airline security bill identical to the Senate and send it to the President tonight. The American people have waited too long for airline security, and then come back and do the Hastings-Gephardt-Bonior bill that we need to deal with on unemployment compensation and health care.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH), one of the newer Members of the House of Representatives, who replaced the ranking member, our dear departed friend Joe Moakley.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) for yielding me this time. I also want to thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) for his solid work on the substitute bill.

Mr. Speaker, the privilege of my new office allows me the great honor of representing many of the neighborhoods and towns that surround Logan Airport in Boston. It just so happens that today I have the sad duty of meeting with many of the families from my district who lost loved ones aboard the flights which departed Logan Airport on September 11.

Mr. Speaker, today is not the day to exempt security screening companies who failed to protect the public on September 11. I am heartsick that these families are families that we were charged and sworn to protect. They should not be overlooked by foreign security companies. We can fulfill our public duty by professionalizing and federalizing airport security personnel and by supporting the substitute bill.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS).

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a fair rule that will allow the people's representatives to consider federalizing the screeners in our Nation's airports. We cannot shortchange the public by continuing to contract out low-wage jobs and less-trained personnel. We need to federalize our airport security. We do not contract out our security for people who work for the INS or the military. Why then would we contract out for airline security?

We have learned the hard way that an airplane can hit anywhere. Federalization means less employee turnover, more experience and accountability. According to GAO, in 1999, turnover averaged 126 percent among screeners at 19 airports. No wonder, since the average pay that they receive is anywhere between \$6 and \$6.75 an hour.

The Republican bill would eliminate the salary cap that we have placed on executive pay. These people earn hundreds of thousands of dollars. Why in

the world would we eliminate the cap instead of providing support for those who are on the frontline, those screeners?

Since screening personnel check more than 2 million pieces of luggage and go through and see millions of people a day, we should upgrade their salaries and their skills.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER), my good friend.

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

When I fly to Washington from Lindberg Field in San Diego and I check in my bags, I see hardworking people trying to do their best for the American public. But they are paid the minimum wage. They get 2 days of training, and there is almost a 200 percent turnover per year at our airport in San Diego.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to professionalize, it is time to stabilize, it is time to federalize that first line of defense for the traveling public. We would not contract out the defense of our border to the private sector. We are not going to contract out our national security. Let us not contract out the airline public safety.

Mr. Speaker, it is time stabilize, it is time to professionalize, it is time to federalize our airline security workforce. Let us pass the Oberstar-Ganske substitute.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO), my good friend.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my distinguished colleague from Florida for the work that he has done on this and how he is handling it, which is always, his work always bears the mark of excellence.

Mr. Speaker, I have long thought that our Nation's airports are part of our Nation's security. That was debated in the Congress for many years. September 11 changed that attitude in the country. I do not think there is a citizen in our Nation today that would question that our national airports are and should be part of our national security. That is why I rise in support of the Oberstar-Lipinski-DeFazio bill.

Now, the Senate passed it 100 to nothing. For those that say this is partisan, it does not have to be. The Senate showed the way. They very seldom do. We know that our firefighters are part of public service. We do not go to the ABC Corporation to hire them. We do not hire our police officers that way.

Today, we need Federal standards, Federal training, baggage checks; and our Nation's airports must, indeed, be part of our national security. We need to pass the bill.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). The Chair would also remind all Members that it is improper to characterize the action or inaction of the Senate.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Is it inappropriate to characterize that the Senate voted 100 to nothing on a specific measure?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would respond to the gentleman that it is appropriate to state the collective facts of a Senate vote. It is inappropriate to characterize an action or inaction of the Senate.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. We could not even call it overwhelming. Okay.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD), my good friend.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the rule for H.R. 3150, because this bill does not address some of the critical issues raised by millions across this country, port authorities, aviation authority and rail authorities and emergency preparedness personnel, some of them which are the first-line responders.

□ 1400

There were 20 amendments that were presented to the Committee on Rules, in an attempt to try to fix a flawed bill that does not address anything that has to do with constituents in my district. I have laid-off workers, many of whom are single women, flight attendants. We have not talked about real anti-hijacking training for flight attendants.

I offered a noncontroversial and relevant amendment to H.R. 3150. It would require the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with Federal departments and agencies, to conduct a threat assessment on all forms of public transportation, public facilities, and gathering places. No such provision is reflected in any of the language in this bill.

I will say to all of my colleagues, vote no on this rule.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA).

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, when all else fails, why do we not consult the facts?

We have heard Members stand up and say that we would not contract out security responsibilities. Mr. Speaker, I will submit that 26 Federal agencies, including the Department of Defense, Department of Justice, Department of State, Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast

Guard, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, our nuclear plants, all contracted out 26 Federal agencies. The list goes on.

Mr. Speaker, this deals with facts. In fact, we do contract this out. We are not asking for any different level.

Mr. Speaker, I ask Members to please not come before the Congress and the American people and tell them that we are protecting those private screening companies that are now doing their job. We take this responsibility away from the airlines, we make it a Federal responsibility. It is federally managed, it is federally supervised. There are Federal background checks. There is Federal testing. Most importantly, there is Federal oversight.

The Israelis, the Europeans, tried the federalize-all-public-employees method, and what did they do? They eventually evolved into a public-private partnership where the government sets the high standards, and that is what we have proposed.

Mr. Speaker, let us deal with the facts. The facts are, this piece of legislation proposed and hastily passed by the Senate creates a two-tier disastrous system, part in the Department of Justice, part in the Department of Transportation. It creates two tiers of law enforcement and leaves law enforcement in the Department of Transportation. It is a disaster.

Mr. Speaker, if we want to pass something in a hurry, yes, we can run up here and tell people we have created 31,000 Federal positions. Yet, they do not have any authority to deal with the problem.

Mr. Speaker, what is even more amazing, Mr. Speaker, I ask Members to read again today's Washington Post. See what is being proposed in the Senate. They are already trying to correct the mess that they passed here.

If we look at one of the provisions of this legislation, and again, I defy the Members, read the bill, they set up an information-sharing for the intelligence system, but they do not share it with the airlines. Who has the passengers list? The airlines. There is no provision in their bill for that.

There is no provision to require all airlines who have passenger lists, for international flights coming into the United States to provide that. That is in our bill. So their bill is a weak, hastily-prepared piece of legislation that would cause untold turmoil and not do the job.

The American people want us to do it right, even if it takes a little longer. We passed legislation in 1996 on airline security and blew it. We passed legislation in 2000, and we still do not have rules in place. There were no rules in place for box cutters.

The biggest flaw, and do not talk about Federal employment, the biggest flaw with the bill proposed by the Senate and the other side is that it has no ability to execute on an immediate basis putting in place rules and regulations. There were no rules September