

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

There was no objection.

EXPRESSING THE GRATITUDE OF
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TO GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 294) expressing the gratitude of the House of Representatives to the General Accounting Office and its employees for enabling the House to continue its work while the House office buildings were closed due to the presence of Anthrax.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 294

Whereas the House of Representatives recently found it necessary to close its office buildings to Members, staff, and the public due to the presence of Anthrax;

Whereas the Comptroller General made an offer to the House of Representatives to make the General Accounting Office's building and equipment available to the Members and staff of the House of Representatives during the period in which the House office buildings were closed, an offer the House gratefully accepted;

Whereas the House's subsequent temporary use of General Accounting Office workspaces, telephones, computers, and other equipment imposed an inconvenience on the employees of the Office, who graciously vacated their worksites; and

Whereas the sacrifices made by employees of the General Accounting Office during this period enabled the House of Representatives to continue its legislative work on behalf of the people of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives expresses its gratitude to the General Accounting Office for accommodating the House during the recent closure of the House office buildings, and sincerely thanks the hundreds of General Accounting Office employees who generously vacated their workspaces and otherwise helped to make it possible for the work of the House to continue during this period.

SEC. 2. The Clerk of the House of Representatives shall transmit a copy of this resolution to the Comptroller General of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY).

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise here today on behalf of my colleague, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), of the Committee on House Administration for consideration of H. Res. 294. This resolution expresses the gratitude of the House of Representatives to the General Accounting Office and its employees for enabling the House to continue its work while the House office buildings were closed due to the presence of anthrax.

Mr. Speaker, I want the citizens of the United States to know that later

on representatives on behalf of all employees of the GAO will be present in the Capitol in Statuary Hall so that we may speak with them and personally express our gratitude.

On October 18, 2001, the House office buildings closed their doors; and we arrived at the GAO on October 22, 2001. The General Accounting Office graciously accommodated Members and their staff through November 5, 2001. With their help, use of phones and work space, we were able to continue our legislative work on behalf of the United States.

I want to personally thank the GAO for the logistical support they provided to the United States House of Representatives while we occupied two floors of their agency. The professionalism and can-do attitude they exhibited is a credit to the agency. The GAO's hard work made a difficult situation manageable, and it will be long remembered.

All facets of the government working together for the common good will only overcome the trying times that face this Nation.

The GAO's efforts demonstrated that resolve. The GAO's partnership throughout this process not only proves their loyalty to this great Nation but also their kindness as employees and as an agency.

Mr. Speaker, when this country was formed, from the first veteran who fought to make this the greatest democracy ever on planet Earth, they envisioned that their efforts would always continue and that there would be an energetic give and take on the floor of the House and the Senate. And let me just say that during this trying time, when it was difficult for employees of the House and the staff and the Members, we got through it by allowing this floor to be able to continue and by our employees, our staff, of the House being able to communicate with the constituents across the United States and to do their job to keep alive the debate that is so important to our democracy. The GAO was an integral part of allowing us to go forth.

I also want to thank the House staff, who transcended through this move under also a very difficult situation. Particularly I would also like to commend our Clerk, Jeff Trandahl; the Sergeant-at-Arms, Bill Livingood; and especially our CAO, Jay Eagen; and their staffs for making all of this possible, again, for us to continue to do our job; also, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), Speaker of the House; the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), the minority leader; and the Committee on House Administration staff; Members, both majority and minority, who all put in their time in order that this transition was made to be as good as it could get.

Once again, the purpose of this resolution is to thank GAO for their unselfish generosity and partnership, and on behalf of the entire House of Representatives, we commend them for

doing such a tremendous job, sacrificing of their time and their offices to make sure that we continue.

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

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am delighted to rise in support of House Resolution 294 and to stand in tonight as co-manager of this bill for my friend, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the ranking member of the Committee on House Administration. The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) is a cosponsor of this bill, as indeed are the other Democratic members of the Committee on House Administration, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. Speaker, it is not common for the Members of the House and their staffs to need to vacate the House office buildings due to the presence of a potentially lethal health hazard, and let us hope it never happens again. Steps are certainly being taken to protect the people's House from future anthrax threats, to defend our country and freedom-loving peoples around the world from the scourge of terrorism.

Pending achievement of that goal, this House indeed owes its thanks to the General Accounting Office for enabling it to continue its work for two critical weeks at the end of October and beginning of November.

The gentleman from Ohio's resolution simply expresses the House's gratitude, and I hope it will pass without dissent.

I want to thank David Walker, the Comptroller General of the United States, for so graciously offering GAO's assistance to the House in our time of need.

I also want to thank Dick Brown, the GAO's Comptroller and Chief Administrative Officer, for his tireless efforts to ensure that the enterprise went smoothly.

I certainly want to thank the dedicated employees of the General Accounting Office who were uprooted and relocated and otherwise inconvenienced to accommodate Members and their staffs.

Mr. Speaker, despite hundreds of us descending upon the GAO headquarters, thereby allowing our legislative work to continue, GAO's important work got continued as well. This is a great tribute to the professionalism of the GAO staff and their ability to adjust to rapidly changing circumstances.

The GAO, in fact, has been an essential support agency for Congress since its creation in 1921. Mr. Speaker, for 2 weeks at the end of October, 2001, and beginning of November, it was more than that. It was serving as the House's home away from home.

The leadership and the staff of the GAO can now say that they have supported the work of the Congress as never before. This episode belongs in

the annals of congressional history, and this resolution ensures that it will be so recorded.

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting that the House express its gratitude to the GAO and its wonderful employees in the way that this resolution determines. I applaud the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) for bringing this important resolution to the floor.

I urge an aye vote on the motion.

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

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO).

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 294.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the employees of the General Accounting Office who sacrificed their personal offices in order to allow the daily business of Congress to continue. As we were trying to maintain some semblance of normalcy, I was amazed at the willingness of the GAO staff to be flexible in conducting their daily business in less than desirable conditions.

I would personally like to thank Mr. Charles Johnson, Jr., and others whose offices at the GAO housed members of my staff. Although it may seem like a small sacrifice in the larger scheme of things, the employees of the GAO played a critical role during very uncertain times. It is obvious that the GAO, once known as the iron fist of government, has slipped on a silk glove of kindness in this urgent time.

Mr. Speaker, all Americans are making sacrifices to ensure terrorism is stricken from our world. We must not forget to thank everyone for his or her cooperation in this time of crisis. If they have not already done so, I encourage my fellow Members of Congress to join me in thanking the employees of the GAO for their graciousness and flexibility.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

In closing, I just wanted to thank my colleague, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE), for carrying this resolution once again; also, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the ranking member.

I would just say in closing that we thank from the Comptroller General down the line all of the employees who gave of their time to help us operate. They are truly great Americans, great patriots and, in general, very good people.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise in support of House Resolution 294, which expresses the gratitude of the House of Representatives to the Government Accounting Office and its employees.

Mr. Speaker, the silver lining to the dark cloud cast upon our nation on September 11th is the ability and willingness of all Americans to sacrifice for the good of the nation.

As this Congress looked for ways to carry out the nation's business amid anthrax scares and other security concerns, the Government Accounting Office and its employees graciously vacated office space so that Members of Congress could continue to do the great work that these times require.

For this great sacrifice, we are proud and we are grateful. The criminals who continue to perpetrate these crimes against Congress and other citizens seek to shake the will of our nation and the will of the Body.

By allowing Members and their staffs to use office space, telephones, and computer equipment, the House was able to continue legislative business. This sacrifice sends the important message to anyone who attempts to harm our great nation: We will be defiant and unrelenting in the face of terror.

I would like to join my colleagues in offering a sincere "thank you" to the Government Accounting Office and its employees for their important sacrifice.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution expressing the gratitude of the U.S. House of Representatives to the General Accounting Office for their assistance during the relocation of member offices.

On September 11th, terrorists attempted to weaken our great nation. They failed. In the aftermath of the attacks, the United States continues to stand strong and wave its flag proudly. We are perhaps stronger now, than we were before.

The American people have come together in a way never before seen, to support their country and help those affected by the attacks on our country.

The Comptroller General and the employees of the General Accounting Office are no exception.

When the Capitol and member's offices were assaulted with anthrax, the Comptroller General and the GAO employees generously shared their office space with the members of the House of Representatives and their staffs. GAO employees made quite a sacrifice in doing so. Many were displaced from their own offices in order to provide the House of Representatives with workspace. Because of the selflessness of these employees, the House of Representatives was able to continue to do their work on behalf of the American people and help our nation fight against the evils of terrorism.

Today, I am pleased to join my colleagues in thanking the Comptroller General and the GAO for their assistance. They have been a great help during this very difficult time and their assistance will be remembered.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to express my strong support of this resolution.

Fortunately, it's not every day that the members of this House, and their staffs, must evacuate the House office buildings due to the presence of anthrax.

Let's hope it never happens again. Steps are certainly being taken to ensure it never happens again.

This House indeed owes a debt of gratitude to the General Accounting Office for making it possible for the people's House to continue its work during those two critical weeks.

The chairman's resolution eloquently expresses the sentiments that should be expressed, and I urge all members to support it.

As one whose office is in the Longworth Building, I spent considerable time working at

the GAO. I found it to be a hospitable place, staffed by hospitable, dedicated Federal workers. I want to express my personal thanks to David Walker, the Comptroller General of the United States, for throwing open the doors of his agency to the House. I also want to thank Dick Brown, the GAO's comptroller and chief administrative officer, for spending many hours working to ensure the whole enterprise went smoothly, which it did. And I generally want to thank the dedicated employees of the General Accounting Office who were relocated, or otherwise inconvenienced, to accommodate me and my staff, and other Members and their staffs. Their sacrifice did not go unnoticed, or unappreciated.

Mr. Speaker, we should note that as hundreds of us descended upon the GAO headquarters, GAO's own important work continued, despite the disruption. This is a grand tribute to the professionalism of GAO employees.

The GAO's mission is to support the work of the Congress as our budgetary watchdog. The leadership and staff of the GAO can now say, with pride, that they have supported the work of the House directly as never before. This incident rightly belongs in the annals of congressional history. This resolution ensures it will be properly recorded.

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting that the House express its gratitude to the GAO and its wonderful employees for allowing us to continue our operations during this time. I applaud the chairman for bringing this resolution to the floor. I urge an "aye" vote on the motion.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H.Res. 294.

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.

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GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of House Resolution 294, the resolution just agreed to.

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

There was no objection.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD ASSIST STATES TO MAINTAIN ADVANCEMENTS IN EDUCATION

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, due to the faltering