

8 of rule XX the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6:30 p.m. today.

RECOGNIZING ELLIS ISLAND MEDAL OF HONOR AND COMMENDING NATIONAL ETHNIC COALITION OF ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 377) recognizing the Ellis Island Medal of Honor and commending the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 377

Whereas the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, established by the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations in 1986, pays tribute to individuals of various ethnic origins who have distinguished themselves through their contributions to the United States;

Whereas the Ellis Island Medal of Honor has been awarded on a bipartisan basis to 6 Presidents and numerous Representatives and Senators;

Whereas the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations is the largest organization of its kind in the United States, representing more than 5,000,000 family members and serving as an umbrella group for more than 250 organizations that span the spectrum of ethnic heritage, culture, and religion;

Whereas the mandate of the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations is to preserve ethnic diversity, promote equality and tolerance, combat injustice, and bring about harmony and unity among all peoples;

Whereas the Ellis Island Medal of Honor is named for the gateway through which more than 12,000,000 immigrants passed in their quest for freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and economic opportunity;

Whereas the Ellis Island Medal of Honor celebrates the richness and diversity of American life by honoring not only individuals, but the pluralism and democracy that have enabled the Nation's ancestry groups to maintain their identities while becoming integral parts of the American way of life;

Whereas during the 15-year history of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, more than 1,500 individuals from scores of different ethnic groups have received the Medal, and more than 5,000 individuals are nominated each year for the Medal; and

Whereas at the 2002 Ellis Island Medal of Honor ceremony in New York City, individuals from different ethnic groups will be honored for their contributions to the rescue and recovery efforts of September 11, 2001, the war against terrorism, and the enhancement of the Nation's homeland security: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the Ellis Island Medal of Honor for acknowledging individuals who live exemplary lives as Americans; and

(2) commends the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations for its sponsorship of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

House Resolution 377 recognizes the Ellis Island Medal of Honor and commends the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations.

The National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations represents more than 5 million people and serves as an umbrella group for more than 250 organizations. Those groups span the spectrum of ethnic heritage, culture and religion. The mandate of the Coalition is to preserve ethnic diversity, promote equality and tolerance, combat injustice and bring about harmony and unity among all people.

The Ellis Island Medal of Honor was established by the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations in 1986. It honors the many groups who have struggled and sacrificed to help build this great Nation. Past medal winners include six Presidents: Presidents Clinton, Bush, Reagan, Carter, Ford and Nixon. Senators, Congressmen, and Nobel Prize winners are also among the 1,500 people who have received Ellis Island Medals of Honor.

The Ellis Island Medal of Honor celebrates the richness and diversity of American life. The award honors more than just individuals. It honors the pluralism and democracy that have enabled our ancestry groups to maintain their identities while becoming integral parts of American life.

By honoring these individuals, we honor all those who share their origins. We acknowledge the contributions they and other groups have made to our country.

The 2002 Ellis Island Medals of Honor will be awarded on May 11. They will honor those individuals from different ethnic groups who contributed to the rescue and recovery efforts stemming from September 11. They will also honor those involved in the war against terrorism and the enhancement of our Nation's homeland security. I congratulate this year's honorees.

I want to commend the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), chairman of the Committee on Government Reform, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for their sponsorship of this resolution and for their support of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. I would also like to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. WAX-

MAN), the ranking member, for helping to bring this important resolution to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, our diversity and our tolerance are two uniquely American values that make this country great. During these troubled times of ethnic strife all around the world, these values are worth reflecting on and honoring in this country. I commend the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations. I urge adoption of this resolution.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I would consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) in consideration of this resolution.

This resolution, which recognizes the Ellis Island Medal of Honor and commends the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations, NECO, encourages diversity and tolerance in American life. The mission of the NECO is to preserve ethnic diversity, promote equality and tolerance, combat injustice and bring about harmony and unity to all people.

To promote its mission, the NECO hosts the Ellis Island Medals Awards Gala, which honors Americans of various ethnic origins for their outstanding contributions to this country.

From 1892 to 1954, over 12 million immigrants entered the United States through the portal of Ellis Island, a small island in New York Harbor. Ellis Island is located in the upper bay just off the New Jersey coast, within the shadow of the Statue of Liberty.

From the very beginning of the mass migration that spanned 1880 to 1924, a group of politicians and nativists demanded increased restrictions on immigration. Laws and regulations such as the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Alien Contract Labor Law, and the institution of a literacy test tried to stem the tide of new immigrants to this country.

Ellis Island ceased to be a major entry point for immigrants in 1921 with the passage of Quota Laws and in 1924 with the passage of the National Origins Act. These restrictions were based upon a percentage system according to the number of ethnic groups already living in the United States as per the 1890 and 1910 Census.

It was an attempt to preserve the ethnic flavor of the "old immigrants," those earlier settlers primarily from northern and western Europe. The perception existed that the newly arriving immigrants, mostly from southern and eastern Europe, were somehow inferior to those who came earlier.

It is appropriate then that Congress recognizes organizations like NECO and American citizens who recognize the importance of preserving ethnic diversity and fostering harmony and unity among all peoples.

Who decides whose identity, culture, or ethnicity is more important or has

more value? Who has that authority? No one. No human being has that authority.

We can, however, embrace our own cultures and those that are unknown and unfamiliar to us. America is a land of United States and of united peoples of various cultures and backgrounds. That is America's strength and greatest asset, and this resolution recognizes that.

It is hard to think of Ellis Island at any time without thinking of the words of Emma Lazarus when she wrote, Give me your tired, your huddled masses, teeming to be free.

Yes, Ellis Island has been a beacon of the openness of what America is seeking to become. I am proud to join in this resolution and would urge all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to express my appreciation to my colleagues in the House of Representatives who voted to pass H. Res. 377, a resolution that I introduced recognizing the Ellis Island Medal of Honor and commending the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (NECO).

NECO's annual medal ceremony and reception on Ellis Island in New York Harbor is the Nation's largest celebration of ethnic pride. Established in 1986 by NECO, the Ellis Island Medals of Honor pay tribute to the ancestry groups that comprise America's unique cultural mosaic. To date, approximately 1400 American citizens have received medals.

NECO is the largest organization of its kind in the U.S. serving as an umbrella group for over 250 ethnic organizations and whose mandate is to preserve ethnic diversity, promote ethnic and religious equality, tolerance and harmony, and to combat injustice, hatred and bigotry. NECO has a new goal in its humanitarian mission: saving the lives of children with life-threatening medical conditions. NECO has founded The Forum's Children Foundation, which brings children from developing nations needing life-saving surgery to the United States for treatment.

Ellis Island Medals of Honor recipients are selected each year through a national nomination process. Screening committees from NECO's member organizations select the final nominees, who are then considered by the Board of Directors. Past Ellis Island Medals of Honor recipients have included several U.S. Presidents, entertainers, athletes, entrepreneurs, religious leaders and business executives, such as Bill Clinton, Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, George Bush, Richard Nixon, George Pataki, Mario Cuomo, Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra, Michael Douglas, Gloria Estefan, Coretta Scott King, Rosa Parks, Elie Wiesel, Muhammad Ali, Mickey Mantle, General Norman Schwarzkopf, Barbara Walters, Terry Anderson, Dr. Michael DeBakey, Senator JOHN MCCAIN, and Attorney General Janet Reno.

I would like to close by expressing my deepest gratitude to my good friends Bill Fugazy and Rosemarie Taglione and everyone associated with NECO and the Ellis Island Medal of Honor.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have no other requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 377.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ACQUISITION STREAMLINING IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3921) to amend the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 to extend until January 1, 2005, a program applying simplified procedures to the acquisition of certain commercial items, and to require the Comptroller General to submit to Congress a report regarding the effectiveness of such program.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3921

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Acquisition Streamlining Improvement Act".

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF PROGRAM APPLYING SIMPLIFIED PROCEDURES TO CERTAIN COMMERCIAL ITEMS; REPORT ON PROGRAM.

Section 4202 of the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 (divisions D and E of Public Law 104-106; 110 Stat. 652; 10 U.S.C. 2304 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (e), by striking "January 1, 2003" and inserting "January 1, 2005"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(f) REPORT.—Not later than March 1, 2004, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report on—

"(1) the effectiveness of the implementation of the provisions enacted by this section;

"(2) the extent to which the amount of time required to award contracts and the administrative costs associated with such contracts were reduced as a result of such implementation;

"(3) the extent to which prices under such contracts reflected the best value; and

"(4) any recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the implementation of the provisions enacted by this section."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TURNER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the leadership of the Chairman of the Committee on Government Reform on this important legislation, and I rise in strong support of H.R. 3921, the Acquisition and Streamlining Improvement Act of 2002. This bill extends for 2 years the Clinger-Cohen Act's successful pilot program for streamlined acquisitions of commercially available items.

The landmark Clinger-Cohen Act recognized the value of these streamlined procedures in its pilot program. They provide the foundation for establishing commercial-like responsiveness in this government when it buys commercial items.

The streamlined procedures apply for purchases of \$5 million or less when a contracting officer reasonably expects that offers in response to a solicitation will only include commercial items. They permit the use of shorter deadlines, fewer burdensome government-unique requirements, and minimized administrative costs. In sum, they give contracting officers greater discretion to select the most advantageous offer for the government and to do so in a business-like manner.

This program has been very useful in a number of different areas. For example, the Pentagon recently used this authority to expedite repairs after the tragic terrorism attack on September 11. DOD set a goal of having the Pentagon restored by this fall, the 1-year anniversary of the attack. That is a very aggressive goal for such a complicated job. If one step in the process falls through, the entire project can fail.

One significant step at the Pentagon has been the effort to quickly restore what DOD calls the critical pathway to the damaged wing. DOD used the Clinger-Cohen pilot program authority to buy routers and switches to reestablish the communications grid. Using conventional procurement procedures to buy this equipment would have added extra months and would have jeopardized the whole project's timely completion by the 1-year anniversary.

The Clinger-Cohen pilot program helped DOD cut through the red tape of this critical pathway and on many other projects in the reconstruction. It also provides strategic management tools that the Department of Defense and other Federal agencies need to establish key acquisition projects in the