

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. I would respectfully suggest to my friend, this isn't about returning to just riding bicycles. This is about getting off a treadmill, a treadmill of dependence on oil, which leads us inevitably to war, which leads us to the destruction of the global climate, which leads us to separation from each other.

We are in a moment right now where we are going to determine the future of this country and we cannot maintain our economic power in the world if we continue to rely on oil, because it is a nonrenewable source of energy. That is why drilling in the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge is a false solution, in addition to being a violation of the human rights of the Gwich'in. There is no need to distort what this debate is about.

You know, we are in Iraq because of oil. We are not signing the Kyoto Climate Change Treaty because of oil. We ought to realize this world is interconnected and interdependent, that we are one with the world. The sooner we understand that, the sooner we end this separation, which puts us in a position where we have our troops right now the Middle East at war. We need to change our direction.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let me end as I began here with a plea that we strive for a better process. This is not the way we should be running our government, bringing bills to the floor at the last minute without having given people the opportunity to read what is in them. We should have learned last year. When the Republican majority brought a bill to the floor, we had to meet again and fix it because someone snuck a provision in there that would allow certain Members of the Congress and their staffs to be able to review people's IRS records. We went back and quickly fixed that after it became public that it was in the bill.

We can do so much better than what we see going on right here at this present time. I think this more than anything else is one of the reasons why I think we need a change of leadership in the Congress. I think there needs to be checks and balances. There aren't checks and balances right now. There needs to be oversight, there needs to be accountability.

We need to do the people's business in a more deliberative way. We have to move away from this pattern of locking people out of opportunities to be able to participate in debates and offer their amendments.

Mr. Speaker, having said all of that, we have no objection to this rule that will allow for filler between now and the time that some of these important conference reports come to the floor.

I will close with this. I think every one of our colleagues needs to know that you are not going to know what is in any of these bills that are coming to the floor. You will find out in the news-

papers. That is not the way this government should run.

Having said that, we have no problem with the rule.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for the opportunity for us to be here today and his collegial support of this rule. The gentleman very clearly understands as a result of his career that he has spent not only serving as a member of professional staff but also as a Member of Congress that Congress does engage in a lot of issues and ideas.

I would submit to him two things: Number one, that the process that we are going through is not perfect. It has existed this way because we have chosen the form of government that we have whereby two bodies get together on pieces of legislation that are of importance. This is something that we have lived through for a long period of time.

I would say to the gentleman that I respect his disagreement about how we should do everything in the day, and in the light of day and hold everything for days and let everybody know. In fact, almost every single piece of any bill has been debated and voted on. There are positions that Senators and Members of this House have taken that I hope are included. I hope that even though they may not be something that was completely understood by one body or another, they were well thought through thoughts and ideas that would be contained.

I believe that the idea of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one that has been debated in this country for over 10 or 12 years. It is time for resolution. For someone that does not understand that putting this on the DOD bill would be appropriate, I wonder who uses more energy than anyone, and it would probably be the Department of Defense. I think there is an intrinsic interest in us making sure that our own security of this country is participated in by and as a result of this being on the bill.

Mr. Speaker, lastly, I disagree with those who say that we need a change of leadership.

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I do recognize that the other side, the Democrat Party, has different ideas about how to do things. But I am proud of my leadership, and I believe that the service of DENNIS HASTERT and those that are committee chairmen and those that are part of our leadership have stood the test of time to make sure that we are open and ready to do business, that we have the leading-edge thought process of this great Nation, that we are open to hearing from those who can help lead us to the greater pathways, and lastly, that we work with those constitutionally elected officials in a process to make sure that our Constitution is alive and well and a model to the world.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of DENNIS HASTERT and his leadership of this House of Representatives and those Members, whether they be from Iowa, Texas, California or Massachusetts, who come to this great body for service to this great Nation. Once again, I am proud of that which we do.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SESSIONS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. SESSIONS of Texas:

Add at the end the following:

(9) The bill (H.R. 797) to amend the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 and other Acts to improve housing programs for Indians.

(10) The bill (H.R. 358) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the desegregation of the Little Rock Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, and for other purposes.

(11) The resolution (H. Res. 456) expressing support for the memorandum of understanding signed by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement on August 15, 2005, to end the conflict in Aceh, a province in Sumatra, Indonesia.

(12) The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 275) expressing the sense of Congress regarding the education curriculum in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, again I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this rule to provide that suspensions will be in order at any time on the legislative day of December 18, 2005.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the amendment and on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATHAM). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS).

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution, as amended.

The resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 632 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 632

Resolved, That the requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported on the legislative day of Sunday, December 18, 2005.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida, (Mr. PUTNAM) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI), 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. PUTNAM asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 632 is a same-day rule that waives clause 6(a) of rule XIII, which requires a two-thirds vote to consider a rule on the same day it is reported from the Rules Committee against certain resolutions reported from the Rules Committee. It applies the waiver to any special rule reported on the legislative day of December 18, 2005.

H. Res. 632 allows the House to consider a rule and underlying legislation that may be reported today.

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that we pass this same-day rule. This resolution will lay the foundation for the House to complete its business and send outstanding legislation to the Senate and eventually the President for his signature. We are working to move the process along towards adjournment of the first session of the 109th Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this same-day rule so we can move forward to serious consideration of the remaining legislation for which we are staying here and working through the weekend to complete.

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

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

(Ms. MATSUI asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, today we consider H. Res. 632, a martial-law rule allowing the House to bring bills to the floor on the same day that the Rules Committee meets to report that bill.

But significantly, the martial-law rule does not specify which bills may be brought up. Instead, it is a blank check for the majority party to bring up virtually any bill in Congress up until the speaker gavels this legislative day to a close.

Mr. Speaker, this is a highly unusual procedure. I would like to take a moment to explain to the American people exactly how out of the ordinary it is.

This is the first time that a totally open-ended blanket martial-law rule has been brought to the House floor. Every other rare use of this procedure has specified at least a category of legislation. This rule is unprecedented for the power it grants the majority.

Mr. Speaker, some Members may argue that the blanket nature of this rule allows them to conduct business efficiently by allowing them to bring up the first thing that is ready to pass.

I, however, take a different view. This will tarnish the honor of this in-

stitution by restricting the democratic process. It will allow bills to come up with absolutely no prior notice to Members. Members may not have time to examine what is in the bill. They may not have even heard of the bill before.

There is a risk that last-minute language could be written incorrectly, or that it could have unintended consequences. There is the risk that controversial provisions could be inserted without proper review.

And by not giving Members this review time, we will be forced to simply hope that this did not occur. Mr. Speaker, I believe that Members need more of a guarantee than that before we cast our votes.

Mr. Speaker, such a harsh rule impedes the democratic process. It did not have to be that way. The House leadership chose not to conduct floor business on Friday of last week, or on Monday of this week. This type of schedule has been commonplace all year long.

So I must conclude that we are here not out of necessity, but because the Republican leadership is unable to govern. Once again, it seems as though the majority cannot be trusted with conducting the business of the American people in an open manner.

I urge my colleagues to reject this blanket martial-law rule. Members should have adequate time to review bills before they vote for them.

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

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman is correct when she characterizes this as an unusual time. It is almost 2 o'clock on a Sunday afternoon and the Congress is in session. These are very unusual times as we approach the end of this first session of the 109th Congress. I do not think anybody would dispute that. I certainly know that our wives and husbands and families who are scattered around the country manning Christmas parties and Christmas pageants as single parents while we are here doing the people's business over the weekend would agree that these are highly unusual times.

I would note that this same-day rule has passed the committee two times on a voice vote, and these concerns were not elevated to the point of even demanding a role call vote.

These are unusual times, I would certainly agree. And in order for us to bring this unusual session that has been marked by cataclysmic events throughout our country which were unforeseen, this unusual session that has seen an unusually productive legislative agenda pass both the House and the Senate and be signed into the law by the President, as we mark the end of this year and do everything we can to pass the legislation that will directly benefit our troops, both at home and abroad through the Department of Defense Appropriations Bill, as we do everything we can in an unusual way on a Sunday night and probably into

the wee hours of Monday morning, to do everything we can to guarantee that our friends and neighbors on the gulf coast in Louisiana and Mississippi and Alabama and south Florida who were hit by Katrina and Rita and Wilma will have the relief that has been promised them and that is so important as so many of them struggle to bring their lives back together, yes, we will continue to operate in this unusual scenario on a Sunday afternoon and Sunday night to do our job, to finish the work that is on our plate.

The House has very successfully moved its appropriations legislation in a very timely manner. But, frankly, while we finished prior to the July 4 recess, Katrina hit during the August recess. Wilma and Rita hit after that. So while we were following the regular order that both sides of the aisle should be very proud of, both sides of the aisle should be very appreciative of our hardworking appropriators who made that happen, it all went out the window when you get hit by a category 5 and then another category 5 and then another category 4 while we were on August recess alone.

So certain unusual factors have impacted this unusual year, which lead us to the unusual situation of being here on a Sunday passing a same-day rule so that we can move forward on the important items that remain.

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

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for the American people to know that under martial law, anything can be brought up and put into any bill; and it will take weeks, months or longer before many people even understand what happened.

But I want to demonstrate a knowledge of one thing that every Member of Congress must be aware of, that the Defense appropriations bill has folded into it a provision which will permit drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Every Member of Congress must be aware of that. No one can say after it happens that they did not know. And according to all news reports up to this moment, it is the intention of the majority to put that provision into the Defense appropriations bill.

It is a very interesting admission. Drilling for oil is linked to our warfighting capabilities. If we do not drill for more oil in this refuge, perhaps we can, instead, explore our peacemaking capabilities. There is no question that our presence in Iraq was, in part, linked to a quest for domination of oil resources. I mean, let us be frank. The first objective, when our troops went in, they were told by their leaders in the administration to get control of the Iraqi oil ministry. Everyone remembers that. And Americans remember, too, the high oil prices that this country has suffered in the last year.

Now, let me ask each Member of Congress, is there any connection between high oil prices and the growing monopolies within the energy industry? The fewer oil companies we have it seems the prices keep going up and up.

Now, what are the oil companies afraid of? They are afraid of alternative energy. They are afraid of energy from the sun, from wind, geothermal, biomass, green hydrogen, because the oil companies know that it will cut into their profits. So, naturally, the oil companies want to keep on drilling. They so badly want to keep on drilling that they are going to drill in Alaska, or in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, if the Defense appropriations bill passes.

Every American should know that that is not going to mean lower oil prices; it is going to mean higher oil prices because it will once again show the domination of the oil companies on our political process.

We could talk about our economy, and we should. High oil prices are bad for our economy. Is that not a message that we should be going towards alternative energy? Reliance on nonrenewable resources inevitably will lead to war. Is that not an argument for renewable energy? Is that not an argument for breaking up the energy monopolies? Oil companies do not want alternative energy. They want us to keep on drilling. They want to grab access to oil whether it is in Iraq or ANWR or anywhere else.

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Wherever we are depending on more oil, they get more profits.

This is a time for us to take a direction towards conservation. In that way I consider myself a conservative. Waste not, want not. It is time for us to take a stand for protection of the environment. The administration has spurned any efforts to cause America to join with the world community in signing the Kyoto Climate Change Treaty, and at the same time we see billions of dollars wasted because of the tremendous suffering that has been caused in our gulf coast region, but I would say that we have wasted the gulf coast region because we did not have an alternative energy policy years ago. We act like there is no connection between climate change and our energy consumption patterns.

Wake up, America. Understand that all these things are interrelated, that we are interdependent and interconnected, that the choices we make today on our energy policy will echo through the years as to the direction the country will go in.

It is time for us to take a stand today for the protection of human rights. The Gwich'in Tribe is this humble tribe that depends on the porcupine caribou for its subsistence, and drilling in that Alaskan refuge is going to destroy the calving grounds of the porcupine caribou.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, while I would love to engage the gentleman in

his theory that big oil companies caused Hurricane Katrina on the rule about consideration of legislation on the same legislative day, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say that I urge my colleagues to reject this blanket martial-law rule. Members should have adequate time to review the bills before they vote for them.

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

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, these are unusual times as we struggle through the important deliberations of this Congress to make sure that our troops are cared for through the Department of Defense appropriations process and that our gulf coast friends and neighbors receive the assistance that they need and have been promised and are owed by their countrymen in the wake of the devastation wrought by these hurricanes.

This rule lays the foundation for us to move that important legislation in a timely way. And martial law around the world means troops on the streets, tanks on the streets, the military setting mandatory curfews where people cannot act in a free and virtuous way.

Only in America would the opportunity for 535 elected representatives to come from around the country to haggle and debate and fight and compromise over ways to help their fellow countrymen and move forward with an agenda for liberty and prosperity and security, only in America do we take for granted our liberties such that we would call such a process "martial law."

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATHAM). The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. MATSUI. 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, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions 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.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF THE HOUSE ON ARREST OF SANJAR UMAROV

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 545) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives on the arrest of Sanjar Umarov in Uzbekistan.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 545

Whereas the United States supports the development of democracy, free markets, and civil society in Uzbekistan and in other states in Central Asia;

Whereas the rule of law, the impartial application of the law, and equal justice for all courts of law are pillars of all democratic societies;

Whereas Sanjar Umarov was reportedly arrested in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on October 22, 2005;

Whereas Sanjar Umarov is a businessman and leader of the Uzbek opposition party, Sunshine Coalition;

Whereas Sanjar Umarov was reportedly taken into custody on October 22, 2005, during a crackdown on the Sunshine Coalition that included a raid of its offices and seizure of its records;

Whereas Sanjar Umarov was reportedly charged with grand larceny;

Whereas press accounts report that representatives of Sanjar Umarov claim that Mr. Umarov was drugged and abused while at his pretrial confinement center in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, but such accounts could not be immediately confirmed, and official information about the health, whereabouts, and treatment while in custody of Mr. Umarov has thus far been unavailable;

Whereas the United States has expressed its serious concern regarding the overall state of human rights in Uzbekistan and is seeking to clarify the facts of this case;

Whereas the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) have expressed concern about the arrest and possible abuse of Sanjar Umarov; and

Whereas the Government of Uzbekistan is party to various treaty obligations, and in particular those under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which obligate governments to provide for due process in criminal cases: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) the law enforcement and judicial authorities of Uzbekistan should ensure that Sanjar Umarov is accorded the full measure of his rights under the Uzbekistan Constitution to defend himself against any and all charges that may be brought against him, in a fair and transparent process, so that individual justice may be done;

(2) the Government of Uzbekistan should observe its various treaty obligations, especially those under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which obligate governments to provide for due process in criminal cases; and

(3) the Government of Uzbekistan should publicly clarify the charges against Sanjar Umarov, his current condition, and his whereabouts.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.