

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, I rise today to proudly introduce H.R. 2695, the Safe Housing Identification Exemption for the Lives of Domestic Violence Victims, the SHIELD Act, with the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. HARRIS). I know of the victims that have finally built up the courage to leave their abusive relationships and have nowhere to go but to a homeless shelter. I know of the women who every day are scared for their lives because their abusers are trying to track them down. I know of the victims who are so scared that they can be tracked down by their predators, and they probably would not seek housing assistance if they knew that HUD required them to disclose their personal information, their Social Security numbers, birth date and location into the homeless management information system database.

I am thinking of those abusers who have ready access to this personal information. They may be their partners. These abusers may work in one of these agencies and have ready access to this database.

I ask my colleagues to please support H.R. 2695, the SHIELD Act, to exclude personally identifying information. Reaching out for assistance is a really big step for these victims. Let us not put them in grave danger.

#### METHAMPHETAMINES

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, there is a growing drug problem in my home State of North Carolina and across America, and it is one we in Congress must face this year. The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy has called methamphetamines one of the fastest growing drugs in America. Worst of all, those producing and trafficking meth often do so in the presence of children. In 2004 alone, 2,754 children were found in 34 percent of the methamphetamine busts.

Along with 14 other Members of Congress, I have introduced H.R. 1616, which would double the maximum jail time of Federal sentencing for those involved in the production or transportation of illicit drugs in the presence of children. Almost as much as abusing meth, being exposed to chemicals involved in its production is extremely dangerous and children found in meth labs have often been physically abused and neglected.

I ask my colleagues to please join me in supporting H.R. 1616 to protect kids from illicit drug production and trafficking.

#### ANNOUNCING MARKUP OF U.N. REFORM ACT

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, as the largest financial contributor to the United Nations, the American people have every right to demand accountability and transparency at the U.N. and the U.N. Reform Act introduced by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and humbly coauthored by myself will be marked up today in the Committee on International Relations and does just that.

To restore the credibility of this world forum, we have to have real reform: in budgeting, oversight, peacekeeping, and human rights. The Hyde/Pence bill authorizes a variety of methods of leverage to enact reforms, including the withholding of 50 percent of U.S.-assessed dues if certifications are not made in key areas.

The U.N. plays a vital role in the world, but it cannot do so if it is bogged down in bureaucracy and scandal. Hyde/Pence provides a vision for U.N. reform and the tough incentives to accomplish it. Hyde/Pence is U.N. reform with teeth, and I urge its adoption.

#### CONSIDERING MEMBER AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H.R. 1704

Mr. CANNON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered as the first sponsor of H.R. 1704, a bill originally introduced by Representative PORTMAN of Ohio, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

#### 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 the remaining 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 vote on the postponed question will be taken tomorrow.

#### RECOGNIZING THE SACRIFICES BEING MADE BY FAMILIES OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 159) recognizing the sacrifices being made by the families of members of the Armed Forces and supporting the designation of a week as National Military Families Week, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 159

Whereas the people of the United States have a sincere appreciation for the sacrifices being made by the families of members of the Armed Forces while their loved ones are deployed in the service of their country;

Whereas military families face unique challenges while their loved ones are deployed because of the lengthy and dangerous nature of these deployments;

Whereas the strain on military family life is further increased when these deployments become more frequent;

Whereas military families on the home front remain resilient because of their comprehensive and responsive support system;

Whereas the brave members of the Armed Forces who have defended the United States since September 11, 2001, continue to have incredible, unending support from their families; and

Whereas the week of June 12, 2005, has been proposed to be designated as National Military Families Week: Now, therefore be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—*

(1) recognizes the sacrifices of military families and the support they provide for their loved ones serving as members of the Armed Forces; and

(2) supports the designation of a week as National Military Families Week.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) and the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. BOREN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the concurrent resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 159, offered today by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN). Today as we continue to fight the global war on terrorism, it is entirely appropriate to honor the families of servicemembers who make sacrifices just as real, and no less difficult, as those who deploy to the war fighting zones.

America may not realize it, but in the last 30 years, the military has gone from a predominantly single male establishment to one with a greater emphasis on family. In 1974, for example, 40 percent of enlisted members were married. Today, nearly 50 percent of the active and Reserve component enlisted members on active duty are married. Among officers, 68 percent of active duty officers and 73 percent of Reserve component officers are married.

There is another story to be told by these statistics. America has become heavily reliant on its Reserve components, the National Guard, the Army and Marine Corps Reserves and the Reserves of the other services. So the burden and sacrifice of war is not confined

to a small portion of America's military. The effort by military families is taking place in many of the small towns, cities, and counties that each of us represents.

In my view, all military families have responded magnificently. So today I call upon my colleagues to support this resolution to honor military families, to thank them for what they have done, and to ask them for their continued support.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1030

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

I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 159, which proposes to designate the week of June 12, 2005, as National Military Families Week. I want to commend the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH), the bill's sponsors, for bringing this matter to the House.

Today, over 280,000 of the 1.4 million soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines are currently deployed around the globe; and, of those currently deployed, more than 200,000 are serving in the CENTCOM area of operation in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. And I am especially proud of the men and women in uniform from my home State of Oklahoma.

However, times have changed since we drafted young, single service members. Compared to those earlier years, many of today's professional volunteer forces are married and have families. Today, there are approximately 700,000 spouses and more than 1.2 million dependent children between the ages of birth and 18 years, and those numbers continue to climb after each deployment.

A National Military Families Week will provide an opportunity to allow the Nation to recognize the sacrifices not only of those who serve in uniform but of the sacrifices that the families make as well. Military families left behind often face a myriad of challenges when a loved one is deployed. Fear, disappointment, depression, anger, respect, admiration, joy, and pride are just a few of the feelings that military families face during those months of separation. Many children will be born while a parent is deployed to Afghanistan or Iraq. Tragically, some of them will never know their parent who served in uniform.

More so than ever, military families are facing birthdays, they are facing proms, graduations, holidays, and weddings and other family events without their service member. So it is fitting that our Nation recognizes the sacrifices being made by military families and appreciate their contributions during a National Military Families Week with appropriate observance and celebration.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), who introduced this resolution.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support H. Con. Res. 159 to recognize the sacrifices being made by the family members of the Armed Forces and to support the designation of the week of June 12 as National Military Families Week. I want to thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) and the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. BOREN) for their leadership on this issue.

Over the last several years I have traveled around the world and met many young men and women serving our country. They have dedicated their lives to defending this Nation and the principles on which it was founded. They have dedicated their lives to protecting each of us and our families.

We have seen an increased awareness of the sacrifices these men and women have been making. Yet there are many more people that are being overlooked. There are husbands and wives who remain here in the United States while their spouses are making an enormous sacrifice. They are here working and caring for children and other family members left behind. These families face unique challenges while their loved ones are deployed. Yet they remain resilient because of the wonderful support system they have here at home.

As we designate a week to recognize and celebrate these families, I urge our citizens to come forward to support these families. We must get involved in our local communities. Several foundations, like the Armed Forces Foundation, the Wounded Warrior Foundation, and the Love Gift Fund, are busy assisting these families and need our help to carry on.

I also want to thank the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH), who is a cosponsor of this bill who is unable to be here this morning.

Recently, I was in Landstuhl in Germany. This is the base that, when the soldiers are injured, they immediately come to out of Iraq. I was there, and we were in the intensive care unit.

A young man that had been wounded on night patrol, I was there in the afternoon, and he had been wounded at four o'clock the previous evening, had lost both his legs below the waist. He wanted to tell his story to us. They literally pulled out the breathing apparatus. He apologized that he could not speak very well and was telling his story, related what had happened. But the first thing he wanted to know was how his wife was doing and was there any way that we could get them paired up, and we reassured him that he would be with her the next day.

But, truly, we have situations like this occurring. We have situations like

that. We have got just the day-to-day situation of the separation, the anxiety and things that are going on. So we have a great opportunity. And I want to thank the leadership and I want to thank their staff for giving me the opportunity to bring this resolution to the floor and encourage Members to vote for it and then again just encourage our community and country to take the opportunity to remember these people, not only in their thoughts and prayers but by deeds and action.

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

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON).

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for yielding me this time.

It is a great honor for me to be here today to speak on behalf of House Concurrent Resolution 159, and I want to congratulate the authors, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) for his leadership in recognizing the importance of military families and designating June 12 as National Military Families Week.

As I stand before this Chamber, I am very grateful to let the Members know that my appreciation of military families is because we are one, and I am very grateful that our family has multiple generations of recognition of how extraordinary it is and what a great honor it is to represent the people of the United States in uniform.

As I think about the multiple generations, I was inspired by my dad, who served in the Flying Tigers during World War II, the 14th Air Force; and I had the extraordinary opportunity 2 years ago to visit with President Jiang Zemin of China, who told me of how the American military is revered in China for the liberation of their country during World War II.

Additionally, I am inspired because of my late father-in-law, who served in the U.S. Marines during World War II. He had been advised that it was impossible for the American Marines to capture the Japanese headquarters at Okinawa, Shuri Castle. It had been fortified and refortified for 400 years, and of course the U.S. Marines took that as a challenge, and they did capture Shuri Castle, and I am very grateful that my late father-in-law was awarded the Navy Cross. But he understood sacrifice. He, following the conflict on Okinawa, was shot in the back by a sniper, and he spent the rest of his life in a wheelchair. But he never regretted his service to the American people.

And the inspiration was to me. I had the privilege of serving 31 years in the Army National Guard, and the reason I stayed in so long is because the people that we meet in the military are dedicated, they are competent, they are patriotic. They are people that inspire people to want to be associated with

them, and I urge young people in particular and families to get involved in the military process.

I also want to give credit to my wife, Roxanne. She has had the great experience of raising three sons who are currently serving in the military today. Our oldest son, Alan, returned in February from serving 1 year and a day in Iraq in the Army National Guard. We are very proud of him. He is classic National Guard. He was mobilized 16 months ago. He was retrained, served for a year in Iraq. He has come back, and now he is Assistant District Attorney in our home county. In fact, this week he had his first case that began at the courthouse. So it is a real testimonial to our Guard members, how they can serve and be citizen soldiers and be proud of serving.

Additionally, our second son 2 weeks ago was promoted to lieutenant in the U.S. Navy, and he is currently serving at the U.S. Naval Hospital in San Diego. We are very proud that he and his wife and two young sons have what I hope will be a long-term career in the U.S. Navy.

And then this week is a big week for our family in that on Friday our third son will be graduating from officer basic school at Fort Gordon, Georgia. So I am really hopeful that we get out of here early enough on Thursday so I can fly to Columbia and drive to Augusta so I can see his graduation.

So as I tell the Members how much I appreciate military families, indeed it is very personal; and I am so grateful for leadership here in Congress of both parties to recognize families.

I have to point out that I just arrived back last week from my fourth visit to Iraq, and I had the opportunity to meet firsthand with our troops in Fallujah. I had the opportunity to meet with our troops at Balad and then at Camp Victory, and we got to meet with the generals. We got to meet with people from our home State, young enlisted personnel, the junior officers. The enthusiasm of our troops, the morale of our troops, just can warm the hearts of family members and also their employers back at home.

A difference is being made. Our troops understand in the war on terror that they are protecting the American families by taking the war to the enemy overseas and that protects American families whom we are recognizing today.

So, again, I want to thank the leaders on this particular bill. I want to urge support of my colleagues of H. Con. Resolution 159.

And, in conclusion, God bless our troops; and we will never forget September 11.

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

I want to thank the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. BOREN) and certainly the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), who introduced this resolution, and my good friend from South Carolina.

I want to make just a few comments, and then I will close.

This is such an important time in the history of our Nation. It is such an important thing that we are doing today in remembering the families. As the Members can see, in front of me is a photograph of a Marine who was getting ready to be deployed. This was a few years ago. In fact, this was before Iraq and Afghanistan. Major Trenchard was getting ready to be deployed to Bosnia, and I have had this photograph for probably 8 years. It is just the greatest shot I have ever seen. Standing on his big boots, we can see his little girl named Megan. This was taken by a newspaper in my State of North Carolina. He is a big man, as we can tell from the photograph, and he is holding in his hands his daughter Bridget.

I believe this is what we are here today about. That is, to thank those who wear the uniform, thank the families who stand beside them. Many times, it is a husband when it is the wife in the military and the wife is overseas, but most of the time it is the wife who is at home and the husband overseas and the wife taking care of the children.

I think about the district I represent, Camp Lejeune Marine Base, Cherry Point Marine Air Station, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, and I want to share with my colleagues on the floor today that in the 11 years I have been in office, I do not have a military background but I have a real sincere appreciation for those who do wear the uniform and their families; and I want to share very briefly in the few minutes I have left some of my thoughts about being in Congress and what has happened that maybe impacted my life that I will never forget that really dealt with military families.

One being that the third year I was in office I got a call from Mrs. Gloria Underwood in Goldsboro, North Carolina, whose husband, Colonel Paul Underwood, was shot down, a fighter pilot, Air Force, in Vietnam. And she called me. I did not know her, and she did not really know me except she knew I was elected to Congress. She said, "We are going to have a service at Arlington. My husband is coming home 30 years after he was shot down and killed."

I never will forget that day. It was in the fall. It was not too cold, but it was cool. My staff and I went over to the chapel at Arlington. It happened to be a Catholic service, and I just sat there looking at the children of Colonel Paul Underwood. He represented all who have ever fought in war that did not come home.

□ 1045

Mrs. Underwood represented the families whose family member did not come home. When I looked at the children in that chapel and looked at Mrs. Underwood and thought for almost 30 years they did not have a husband,

they did not have a father, I thought, what a price to pay. But thank God for those like Colonel Underwood who are willing to pay the price so that we can enjoy the freedom in this great Nation known as America.

The other story I would like to share very quickly, and I am going to put another photograph up, if I may, this is a photograph of a child whose name is Tyler Jordan. Tyler's father was a gunny sergeant, actually at one time stationed at Camp Lejeune, and his name was Phillip Jordan.

I saw this photograph in a newspaper, and I was so taken by the look on this young boy's face. He has got the folded flag under his arm, he has got a little flight jacket on, and he is holding the hand of a military person. You can tell that by the uniform.

This reminded me of a Marine whose funeral I went to at Camp Lejeune. His name was Michael Bitz. Michael was 31 years old. He was killed at Fallujah. He left a wife, Janina, and four children, including twins that he never saw. The twins were born 2 months after he was deployed.

At the funeral, she read the last letter she received from him, and I remember four points very quickly, and then I will make a couple more comments and close.

He talked about how much he missed his family and how much he appreciated the photograph of the twins. He talked about the fact he was a religious man, that Jesus Christ was so important in his life. He made a third point in the letter. He said, "I hope that He," meaning the Lord, "will give me the strength to do what I am supposed to do for my country." Then the fourth point was he said to Janina, "I don't know if I will see you on Earth or in heaven, but one day we will be back together."

I share that because I think this ties right into this resolution introduced by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BOOZMAN) and supported by both sides. Too many times, unless we have a loved one in the military, we forget the stress, the pressure, that is on the family. That is why I think this resolution is so, so vital today.

Madam Speaker, one other point I want to make, and this was given to me earlier, there is an article in today's USA Today, June 8, and it talks about soldiers' divorce rates are up sharply. I wanted to read one thing very quickly:

"The trend is severest among officers. Last year, 3,325 army officers' marriages ended in divorce, up 78 percent from 2003, the year of the Iraq invasion, and more than 3½ times the number in 2000, before the Afghanistan operation. Army figures show for enlisted personnel, the 7,152 divorces last year were 28 percent more than in 2003, and up 53 percent from 2000."

Madam Speaker, I share that as we begin to close this debate. It is important what we are doing today with this resolution. It is important that we as a

Congress, as we always do in a bipartisan way, work for our military and their families. We shall never forget the cost of freedom, and I know that the people in America feel as passionately as I do, that we need to always remember that those who wear the uniform, whether it is peacetime or wartime, must be supported and their families, with the quality-of-life issues, must be maintained adequately.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution recognizing the families of the members of the U.S. Armed Forces and supporting the designation of National Military Families Week.

I commend the gentleman from Arkansas for introducing this important tribute to the families of our brave men and women in Iraq, Afghanistan and along the front lines of the global war on terrorism. American families with sons and daughters deployed overseas deserve our recognition for the support and comfort they provide every day.

Nearly 40 percent of service men and women who are currently deployed or away from their permanent duty stations have left families with children, and there are over 3,000,000 family members and dependents of those serving on active duty and in the reserves. These families share unique challenges as they endure unpredictable recalls, extended tours of duty, and deployments that can be as frustrating and painful as recovering from the traumas of war and the readjustment to life back home.

By passing this resolution today, military families will know that America understands and appreciates the critically important link between the support they provide and the readiness of our troops. Having honored our fallen this past Memorial Day, we extend our appreciation to the active duty and reserve personnel, as well as their families, who continue making sacrifices to help our troops honor their commitments to the Armed Forces and to our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this resolution and look forward to working toward providing military families the assistance they deserve for their many contributions and dedication to our troops.

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 159 because now it is more important than ever for our Nation to show our support for our warfighters. While our Armed Forces are engaged in struggles in Afghanistan against the terrorists that attacked our Nation—and deployed against insurgents in Iraq—they represent the interests of our Nation.

We are at war; and the people who carry the guns and go after our enemies have a job that is harder than any of us can imagine. This Nation asks our men and women in the armed service to carry out a mission in which their lives are frequently in danger. Many do not come home to their families' arms. The ones who do come home must cope with new realities in their lives, and in the lives of their families.

As a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, there's a wisdom to our recruitment. First, you recruit a soldier. When he re-enlists, you recruit the whole family. Much of our retention problems stem from families simply not being able to handle the emotional strain of a loved one serving, plus the financial detriment military service can present.

While loved ones are away serving our Nation in uniform, families are left with only one parent and all the responsibility of the family. In the case of National Guard and Reserve service members, it nearly always leaves the family with much less earning power and the entire family must make do with less. This breeds a number of challenges for military families.

While we in Congress must do all we can to help those families financially and with appropriate health care and other quality of life components . . . the least we can do today is to have a special week to recognize the difficulties that our military families live through every day. We must remember their sacrifices every day, but it is useful and educational to take a week to officially honor the sacrifice of the families of those who wear the uniform of the United States.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 159, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 27, WITHDRAWING APPROVAL OF THE UNITED STATES FROM AGREEMENT ESTABLISHING THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 304 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 304

*Resolved*, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 27) withdrawing the approval of the United States from the Agreement establishing the World Trade Organization. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. The joint resolution shall be debatable for two hours equally divided among and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means, Representative Paul of Texas, and Representative Sanders of Vermont or their designees. Pursuant to section 152 of the Trade Act of 1974 and section 125 of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution to final passage without intervening motion.

SEC. 2. During consideration of H.J. Res. 27 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to a time designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. 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. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks, and include extraneous material.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 304 is a rule providing for 2 hours of general debate on H.J. Res. 27, withdrawing the approval of the United States from the agreement establishing the World Trade Organization, to be equally divided among and controlled by the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL), and the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS).

The rule provides that during consideration of H.J. Res. 27 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to a time designated by the Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this fair rule, but in opposition to the underlying H.J. Res. 27, withdrawing the approval of the United States from the agreement establishing the World Trade Organization.

In 1994, Congress passed the Uruguay Round Table Agreements Act establishing the World Trade Organization, an independent body charged with monitoring and determining compliance with trade agreements. That law authorized the President to accept the United States' membership in the WTO and requires a report to be submitted to Congress every 5 years on the United States' participation in the WTO.

The law also offers Congress the opportunity every 5 years to assess whether continued membership in this organization is in the best interest of the United States. I believe that Members of the House should be afforded this opportunity to register their views on this question through a vote of the House, which I urge my colleagues to vote on in support of this rule.

The United States already has low tariffs, few subsidies, and a history of abiding bylaws and agreements. Our farmers and producers in my area in central Washington and across the country are some of the most efficient in the world and are capable of competing and winning in world markets, so long as they do not face foreign government policies like subsidies and dumping practices that stack the deck against them.

The enforcement of a rules-based trading system through the World Trade Organization is our best opportunity to gain access to these markets for our Nation's farmers and rural communities. The removal of artificial barriers to trade is of critical importance