

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from this chamber on July 22, 2005. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes 415 and 416.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 415 and 416, I was detained in a conference with the Senate. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on rollcall No. 415 and "aye" on rollcall No. 416.

#### AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 3070, NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2005

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that in the engrossment of the bill, H.R. 3070, the Clerk be authorized to make technical corrections and conforming changes to the bill.

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

There was no objection.

#### LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I take this time for the purpose of inquiring of the majority leader the schedule for the week to come.

I yield to my friend, the majority leader.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, the House will convene on Monday at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. We will consider several measures under suspension of the rules. A final list of those bills will be sent to Members' offices by the end of the day. Any votes called on these measures will be rolled until 6:30 p.m.

On Tuesday and the balance of the week, the House will consider additional legislation under suspension of the rules, as well as several measures under a rule: H.R. 525, the Small Business Health Fairness Act of 2005; H.R. 5, the HEALTH Act of 2005; and H.R. 22, the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act. In addition, we expect to consider H.R. 3045, the Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement sometime later in the week.

Finally, I would like to note that we are expecting a very busy week heading into the August recess. Members should expect to work some late nights as we resolve these important pieces of legislation.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for that information. Realizing that next week is a busy

week and there are a number of very important items on the agenda, how likely, Mr. Leader, do you think it is that we will be in on Friday?

I yield to the distinguished gentleman.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. There is no way that we can tell what hour of the day on Friday that we might be finished with our work. As the gentleman knows, next week is going to be a typical pre-district work period week. We have several bills to consider, as well as multiple potential conference reports. Because of the unpredictability of conference reports, I would hesitate to even make firm commitments for any of the week.

For now, I would note that our plan is to consider both postal reform and small business health plans on Tuesday, and after that we will have to see where various components are and how they come together.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, thank you for that information, Mr. Leader.

Mr. Leader, obviously next week I suppose the most controversial and most focused-upon piece of legislation will be the Central American Free Trade Agreement. This week, of course, the PATRIOT Act, which we thought was going to start Thursday and go through today, in fact was accelerated and NASA was taken today, clearly to ensure full consideration of the PATRIOT Act.

Might it be possible with some assurance to let the Members know when the CAFTA bill will be on the floor, in effect adopting a similar procedure?

I yield to the majority leader.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

As I said earlier, it is very difficult. Certainly we will consult with the minority as to timing. For instance, right now we think we will have a highway conference report. There may be an energy conference report. There could be one to three appropriations conference reports. It is very difficult today to fashion a schedule that we could give to the Members.

I feel very confident by Monday we will have a better feel for what the week should look like and, in consultation with the minority, we would have a better idea when the Central American Free Trade Agreement can be considered. But I say to the gentleman that it will be fully discussed with an ample amount of time for debate, and we will just do it when we can get to it.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the leader for that response. I understand the problem of pinning down now exact times. Would it be fair, however, Mr. Leader, to say that it would not be considered on the last day we are here, on Friday, or not, so that we could make sure that Members knew and had some degree of confidence, because it is such an important piece of legislation, that it would not be considered on the last day we are here?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

I cannot say that. I really do not have any idea. I know it will be after Tuesday, and that is about the best I can give the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, the postal accountability bill, you seem to indicate that that might be considered earlier in the week rather than later. Is that accurate?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Yes, we plan to present the postal reform bill on Tuesday. We think we can do both that and the small business health plan on Tuesday.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the leader.

Reclaiming my time, you mentioned appropriations bills. Are we likely to have motions to go to conference on appropriations bills next week; and if so, can you anticipate what bills that might be?

Mr. DELAY. It is possible that Interior, Legislative Branch, and Homeland Security conference reports could be presented by next week.

Mr. HOYER. Those conferences would be on the floor, is that what the gentleman is saying, possibly?

Mr. DELAY. We could bring them to the floor by next week.

Mr. HOYER. In terms of motions to go to conference, do you anticipate motions to go to conference on any appropriations bills next week?

Mr. DELAY. If the gentleman will continue to yield, we would have to go to conference on those three bills for sure, and, depending on the progress of the other body, we may be going to conference on others.

Mr. HOYER. I appreciate that. On the bill of the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SHADEGG), I think it is H.R. 2355, dealing with the insurance issues, there is a lot of interest on our side of the aisle. Will that bill be considered? Did you list that as one of the health bills that would be considered?

Mr. DELAY. If the gentleman will continue to yield, no, we did not list that bill as of yet. There are still discussions going on about that bill, and until those discussions are concluded, we cannot predict when it will come to the floor.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Leader, I take it that in light of the fact you have not mentioned it, at this point in time it is not on the schedule. But there is a lot of discussion on this side of the aisle about that bill. Do you think it would be possible that it might be added to the calendar?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. I appreciate the gentleman yielding. It is possible it could be added to the calendar, but looking at how busy a week we have next week and the controversial issues that we will be bringing to the floor of the House, it is hard to say if we could put that bill on the floor next week.

Mr. HOYER. Because there is so much interest in that bill on our side, Mr. Leader, would it be fair to say that that decision would be made prior to the close of business on Monday so that we would have some notice of that in time to fairly consider it?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. I appreciate the gentleman yielding. We will try our best, in consultation with you, to give you some idea of when we could possibly bring that bill, and if it is going to be considered next week and we can fit into the schedule, then certainly we would let you know by probably the end of business Monday.

□ 1230

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, we would appreciate that.

The other bills that I would like to talk about, the highway bill conference report the gentleman indicated as a possibility, can the gentleman inform us of the status of that conference and where we are on this bill?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend yielding. I am very encouraged. I serve on the conference committee, so I am very encouraged by the accomplishments and progress that has been made over the course of this week.

I believe there is really only one major issue left to be resolved by the conferees, and that relates to transit funding. Hopefully, that can be resolved prior to the Wednesday night expiration of the current short-term funding measure, and then, as normal, there are a lot of smaller issues that can be resolved by then. I am very hopeful that we can pass that conference report before we leave here next week.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I presume, am I correct, that the gentleman's effort would be to try to pass it prior to the expiration of the last temporary extension, or would the gentleman anticipate another, which I guess would be the tenth or the eleventh extension; or does the gentleman think he can perhaps get it through prior to Wednesday night?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. Everyone is working as hard as they can. As the gentleman knows, this bill has taken a long time to work out the differences between the House and the Senate. We get very close every time we reach the deadline of an expiration date.

The expiration date is set on Wednesday. Everybody is going to be working over the weekend, and we are working as hard as we can with the goal to bring that conference report to the floor before the expiration of the short-term funding measure.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the leader for his comments and observations. We are certainly hopeful on our side, and I know the gentleman is on his side, that

we get this bill through. It is probably as significant a jobs creation bill as we will pass in this Congress, and it has been delayed for a very long period of time. I know the gentleman has been frustrated by it, and we have been frustrated by it, and hopefully, we can get that done by next week.

The energy bill conference report, can the gentleman tell us where that stands? I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. We are working on it. We hope to get it done by the end of next week. It is a very ambitious goal, I must say, to take a bill of this magnitude and, in a matter of 2 weeks, get all the differences worked out between the House and the Senate and bring it to the floor.

This is another item that the House and Senate are working on through the weekend, and at least encouragement has been brought to my attention by the chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce that, with a lot of hard work, it is very possible that we could get this energy conference report to the Members for a vote by the end of next week.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, in light of the fact, Mr. Leader, I will simply observe that if we get all of those things moving we are going to have a lot of work to do next week, and I presume our Members ought to be prepared for long days and, clearly, if we get all of that done, it will be Friday late before we get out of here.

In light of the fact we will not have a colloquy next week because we will be going on recess for the summer work period, can the gentleman tell us what he anticipates might be on the agenda when we come back on September 6, what might be on the agenda early in the September weeks? Clearly, appropriations bills conference reports, to the extent they are done, will be on the calendar, but other than that, can the gentleman enlighten us as to what your thoughts are? I yield to the leader.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. We have not made any decisions yet, but obviously the gentleman knows and Members understand that the appropriations process did end with us passing our bills before the July 4 break. The Senate is working on appropriations bills, and we will be doing those conferences as they present themselves.

Also, we do know that at least the first week back, we could be looking at the Coast Guard authorization bill and possibly a research bill from the Committee on Science. That is the first week back. Other bills will be considered during the August district work period, and we will be able to make a more firm announcement to the Members as to what we anticipate having the first week back and, in addition to that, the second week also.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for that information.

Lastly, there are two pieces of legislation, major pieces of legislation that the gentleman did not mention but have been talked about, and that is, of course, the Social Security legislation and the campaign finance legislation, one or the other bill, or both.

Can the gentleman give me his thoughts on where they stand and when they might come on the agenda if, in fact, they will be coming on the agenda?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. The campaign finance committees are still working on those issues. It is quite possible that we could address those issues in September. The way that I am watching the schedule of the other body, we will probably be here at least a week or two after October 1, and we would be working on those issues.

I have every expectation that the Committee on Ways and Means will put out a retirement security bill for us to consider in September or the first of October. And, I am sure the gentleman remembers, we have a reconciliation process that is ongoing. We could have a reconciliation bill in that time period.

So those are some of the major issues that we will be facing in September and October.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the leader for all of the information.

#### ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, JULY 25, 2005

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debates.

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

There was no objection.

#### DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

#### EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING THE BALTIC COUNTRIES OF ESTONIA, LATVIA, AND LITHUANIA

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on International Relations be discharged from further consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 128) expressing the sense of Congress that the Government of the Russian Federation should issue a clear