

process. In the subcommittee, full committee we could have resolved these matters in an expeditious manner in a very expedited way. But failing the committee process, we have reached, I think, a very sound, very progressive and forward-looking outcome.

I want to restate section 2 of the pending bill, line 8: "In carrying out this section, a contract or agreement may be set aside for award based on a specific geographic area." This is unmistakable language. It reaffirms the original intent of the Stafford Act, reaffirms historical precedent, and states it very clearly in legislative language.

We intend to get this bill passed this afternoon, and I hope the other body will act expeditiously as well so we can make this very, very clear and proceed on the awards of these contracts and reestablish businesses in Mississippi, as the gentleman from Mississippi has so well and firmly and forcefully stated as a very strong and effective advocate for the people of his district.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your cooperation. It always seems to me that the gentleman from Minnesota and a gentleman from Pennsylvania are working on the FEMA program, Mr. Klinger, Mr. Ridge, and the gentleman's father, the first Mr. Shuster. Every time we do, we come up with a good result.

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

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for those kind words.

The Local Community Recovery Act makes sense. As the ranking member pointed out, it clarifies and reaffirms the language in the Stafford Act. It also directs the corps to move forward quickly so we can see the cleanup continue to make progress in the Mississippi and in the gulf coast region.

I want to again thank Mr. OBERSTAR for his cooperation on this issue. Once again, the T&I Committee has come together in a bipartisan manner and moved forward for the betterment of this Nation. I also thank Mr. PICKERING for his leadership and in working so closely with the T&I Committee to put this together for what I think is going to be a very positive outcome.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4979, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMENDING HAITI FOR HOLDING DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to

the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 353) commending the people of the Republic of Haiti for holding democratic elections on February 7, 2006, and congratulating President-elect Rene Garcia Preval on his victory in these elections.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 353

Whereas the Republic of Haiti held democratic presidential and legislative elections on February 7, 2006;

Whereas reports indicate that the elections were peaceful and that 2.2 million Haitians—more than 60 percent of registered voters—participated in the elections;

Whereas many Haitians walked miles on election day to reach a polling station and waited for hours in line to exercise their right to vote;

Whereas the participation of an overwhelming number of Haitians in the elections demonstrates the commitment of the Haitian people to democracy;

Whereas on February 16, 2006, Rene Garcia Preval was declared the winner of the presidential election with 51.15 percent of the vote;

Whereas on February 23, 2006, the White House announced that President George W. Bush phoned President-elect Rene Garcia Preval to congratulate him on his victory in the elections and to discuss cooperation in Haiti's economic development and the fight against the illegal drug trade;

Whereas the elections of February 7, 2006, are a sign of hope for the future of the people of Haiti;

Whereas violence and natural disasters have caused tremendous suffering and loss of life in Haiti;

Whereas the people of Haiti would benefit from efforts to achieve national reconciliation; and

Whereas the elected government of Haiti will need the support and assistance of the United States and the international community to ensure social and economic development and to improve the lives of the Haitian people: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) commends the people of the Republic of Haiti for holding democratic elections on February 7, 2006;

(2) congratulates President-elect Rene Garcia Preval on his victory in these historic elections; and

(3) pledges its support and assistance for national reconciliation, democracy, and development for the people of Haiti.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this concurrent resolution that commends the people of Haiti for holding peaceful and democratic elections on February 7 and expresses the sense of the United States Congress that the U.S. should actively support efforts in Haiti to move that country toward national reconciliation, democracy, and development.

Further, the resolution acknowledges the Haitian people's needs for sustained support and assistance from the United States and indeed the international community to ensure social and economic development.

The elections took place February 7 with 2.2 million Haitians, over 60 percent of the registered voters, participating. There were only minor reports of violence and voting flaws.

This bill recognizes the perseverance of the Haitian people as they struggle to maintain democracy. Many Haitians walked miles on election day to reach a polling station, and they waited hours in line to exercise their right to vote. The participation of an overwhelming number of Haitians in these elections clearly demonstrates the commitment of the Haitian people to democracy.

I support the Waters resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 353, a resolution to commend the people of Haiti for the success of their recent election and congratulates President-elect Rene Preval on his victory in the elections. President-elect Rene Preval defeated a large field of candidates and won the election with over 51 percent of the vote.

The people of Haiti have suffered tremendously as a result of violence and natural disasters, and the elections are a sign of hope for the future of the Haitian people. This resolution pledges the support of Congress and the assistance of the United States for national reconciliation, democracy, and development for the people of Haiti.

Finally, this resolution embodies the hope that many of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle share, that democracy, stability, and prosperity will be realized as Haitians move beyond these recent elections and put the turbulent chapter behind them. I urge my colleagues to show their support for democracy in Haiti by supporting this resolution.

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

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

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my commendation and appreciation to the distinguished chairman, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), for his leadership and support of this legislation, and also our senior ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS). I do also want to thank my distinguished friend

and colleague, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), for her management and being on the majority side in support of this legislation.

Of course not least of all, the author of this legislation, my very dear friend, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), who is the sponsor, the chief sponsor and author of this proposed resolution.

Mr. Speaker, it was my privilege to travel several times to Haiti with one of our distinguished and senior colleagues of this institution, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS). I can appreciate the many problems and issues facing the good people and the leaders of the country of Haiti. I do want to say I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, with the cherry blossoms in full bloom in the Nation's capital, democracy is once again blossoming in the troubled island nation of Haiti.

After a tumultuous 2 years under an interim government, the people of Haiti recently went to the polls en masse to elect a new President and a new legislature. After some delay, Mr. Rene Preval was declared the victor in the presidential contest. He is due to be inaugurated after the second round elections for the remaining seats in the National Assembly that are being held. These are scheduled for sometime next month.

Mr. Speaker, once again Haiti has a new chance to emerge from years of conflict and despair and grinding poverty to build a country that reflects the resourcefulness of its people and leaders. The task is tremendous. Haiti still lacks a professional police force that respects human rights and is trusted by the populace.

□ 1700

The murderous drug-dealing organizations continue to control parts of the capital and threaten instability in other parts of the country. Many schools are not in operation and most hospitals are little more than way-stations for the morgue. Infrastructure is virtually almost nonexistent.

Mr. Speaker, although the challenges before him are awesome, I think our President-Elect Preval is singularly capable of addressing these issues, but he cannot and he should not do it alone.

Our own government, the United States, working through the United Nations with our bilateral partners must redouble our efforts and financial commitment to Haiti so that the consolidation of democracy and the rebuilding of the country's economy have a reasonable chance of succeeding.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the President's budget proposal for Haiti for next year fails miserably in this regard. At a time when we should be deepening our commitment to the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, the President proposes to cut core development spending to Haiti by about 20 percent.

I am hopeful that as a result of the efforts of my colleagues, especially including our newly elected ranking member of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), we will be able to remedy the administration's shortsightedness through a Foreign Operations appropriations process. Indeed, given the extraordinary opportunity presented by these elections, I hope my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee in this and the other body will consider adjusting the pending emergency supplemental appropriations bill to include funding for the urgent needs of the Republic of Haiti.

In the meantime, I look forward to the April second-round elections and the overdue inauguration of Haiti's newly elected president.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY), who just got back from a trip to Haiti with Ms. WATERS, the author of this resolution.

Mr. FOLEY. Thank you, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Madam Chairman. And first let me thank MAXINE WATERS, my colleague from California, who not only accompanied me to Haiti, but traveled from California on a late-night red eye to meet me in Miami to fly to Haiti, to fly back to California that very day, in a gesture of goodwill, in a bipartisan gesture of goodwill to show Rene Preval that the United States Congress, Democrat and Republican, wish him Godspeed in helping the people of Haiti.

Chairwoman ROS-LEHTINEN told you the facts. On February 7, 2.2 million Haitians went to the polls and exercised their constitutional right to select a leader. They went by foot, by tap tap and other forms of transportation, traveling hours and standing in line for almost a day to get to their polling places.

Despite some early challenges, things did go very well. Mr. Preval, a populist president, as the only person to ever serve a full term as an elected president in Haiti, brings to his office the hopes and dreams of every Haitian. As we sat with Mr. Preval, I think MAXINE and I both felt a palpable sense of hope and optimism.

Mr. Preval understands the challenges that face him in Haiti. Mr. Preval was quick to suggest they don't need an army and waste tax dollars or federal dollars or dollars from other countries in establishing an army. He wants a legitimate police force. He wants a police force free of corruption. He wants health care and education to the provinces of Haiti.

He knows the challenges that lie before him, but as a wonderful man with a cheerful disposition, he is ready to accept those challenges. But he needs our help; he desperately needs the help of the United States, of Canada, of

France, of CARICOM, of world leaders who are willing to invest in the plight of the Haitians.

We noticed a bounce to the steps, and I reported that to my hometown paper, the Palm Beach Post, which wrote a brilliant article and an editorial on our trip to Haiti, because for the first time you could see some optimism in the people's faces. You could see commerce flourishing in the market square.

And I don't want to mischaracterize. There are huge problems in Haiti. But just a sense that we may have finally turned a fresh page, a new chapter, a new opportunity for Haitians, and particularly for Haitians living in the United States who think about their families back there and simply want the best for them. They have arrived on our fabulous shores and have contributed to our community, but they also think back, as all generations of people from other countries do, about those that are back home. Will they be safe? Will they be healthy? Will they be prosperous? Is there a chance, a fighting chance that they will be given an option like most of us to live in peace and tranquility, raise their kids.

What I noticed too was the incredible number of children going to school and wearing beautiful dress uniforms and skipping along the streets. Again, once again, a sense of optimism. And having been there right after 2004, I can assure you there were challenging moments when you felt all was lost and all hope had faded and all optimism was extinguished.

Rene Preval, the president-elect, is here in our Capital tonight. Many of us, including Chairman SHAW of the Trade Committee and Ranking Member RANGEL, Chairman THOMAS and others are going to greet him and welcome him and talk about some aggressive trade approaches that we hope to launch in our committee. So in the spirit of bipartisanship and goodwill for those here in this Chamber who are willing to go that extra mile, I reach out the hand of friendship to Mr. Rene Preval, soon to be President Preval, as he embarks on a journey that has tremendous impact on all Americans.

And I thank Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN, as well, for her steadfast engagement in our conversations on Haiti, on the hemispheres that surround Haiti, because all of us, if we are going to truly solve this puzzle, need to solve it together. We will put the past behind us, the acrimony behind us, the politics behind us and move forward with a new day for Haitians.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), the distinguished ranking member of our Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from American Samoa for recognizing me. I also want to call attention on our side of the aisle to my colleagues, Congresswoman WATERS, Congresswoman LEE and my good friend, Congressman DELAHUNT, who have always been carrying the ball on the

issue of Haiti and the U.S. response to Haiti and the U.S. friendship with Haiti. I really take my hat off to all of them.

I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 353, which praises the people of Haiti for their recent elections and congratulates Rene Preval on his victory. I commend my friend and colleague, as I mentioned, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, for introducing this resolution, and I am pleased to be an original cosponsor. I am pleased that my district, the 17th District in New York, has a very large Haitian community in Spring Valley, New York; and I know they are all eagerly anticipating better things for Haiti and U.S.-Haiti relationships.

After a history of instability, poverty and democratic setbacks, Haitians poured onto the streets last month to cast their votes, demonstrating their desire for a better future. And after a contested vote counting period, the front runner in the presidential election, Rene Preval, was declared the winner with nearly 52 percent of the official vote, compared to less than 12 percent for his closest contender. Now, such a large margin of victory gives Mr. Preval a strong mandate and legitimacy to reform and rebuild Haiti's institutions and fractured society.

Yet the challenges are vast. The same massive underlying problems still plague Haiti, and a second round of elections looms in the coming weeks.

While the Haitian people and government have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring their future, we in the United States have a duty to assist in every aspect of Haiti's political, economic and social state-building. Moreover, given Haiti's proximity to our borders, we have an overwhelming interest in doing so.

Now is the time for the United States to tangibly demonstrate that it stands with the Haitian people in their quest for democracy and stability. Therefore, together with Chairman BURTON and a bipartisan group of subcommittee colleagues, I recently called for us to seize this limited window of opportunity by providing \$50 million extra money in fiscal year 2006 supplemental assistance for our neighbors to the south.

Elections signal the beginning of a transition, not an end. It is thus my hope that the Appropriations Committee will ensure that Haiti's enormous needs are met. This is the least we can do to help the Haitian people at this critical time.

I also call on the administration to work with the citizens of Haiti, their newly elected government and the international community to help Haiti advance on its path of freedom and prosperity. And I urge Secretary of State Rice to attend Preval's upcoming inauguration.

And finally, I reiterate my congratulations to the people of Haiti for their successful elections and to Rene Preval for his victory. I would like to highlight that President-Elect Preval is

visiting Washington today, as the gentleman from Florida mentioned. And I look forward to meeting him and offering my full support for Haiti's quest for national reconciliation, democracy and development. I am proud to be the ranking Democrat of the International Relations Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, and I look forward to working with my colleagues.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), the distinguished lady and the chief sponsor of this legislation, my good friend.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker and Members, I thank the gentleman from American Samoa, and I would like to thank the Chair of the International Relations Committee, the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the ranking member of that committee, my colleague from California, Congressman LANTOS, and the Chair and ranking member of the International Relations Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, Congressman BURTON and Congressman ENGEL.

I would also like to commend Congressman FOLEY, and before I talk a little bit about our visit, I would like to thank many Members of Congress: Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, who co-chairs the task force on Haiti with Congressman JOHN CONYERS and the Congressional Black Caucus; Congressman DELAHUNT; Congresswoman JAN SCHAKOWSKY; the many Members of Congress who have fought and stayed with the problem and did not give up.

Haiti, and the people of Haiti have suffered mightily. The struggle between the haves and the have-nots is legendary, the rich versus the poor, the elite versus the rejected, the mulattos versus the blacks.

Haiti needs a break. Haiti has experienced economic dislocation. It has experienced devastating hurricanes. But the people of Haiti have worked and they have believed in democracy. And so the people, on February 7, 2006, they went to the polls and they voted. More than 60 percent of the people of Haiti registered and they voted. They demonstrated their commitment to democracy.

Oh, they had all kind of obstacles. On that day there was a shortage of election workers and polling places, and there were long lines that caused voters to have to wait for hours before they could exercise their right to vote. But they voted. And they did what they had to do. They walked for miles and they voted. And in the end, President Preval emerged victorious.

The people of Haiti voted, including the Lavalas Party, the party that had elected President Aristide. They voted in large numbers. They are the predominant party in Haiti. And despite their lingering concerns about the way in which their democratically elected president, Mr. Aristide, had been removed from office, they did not boycott the elections. Despite the obstacles and the inconveniences of the elec-

tion, they were determined to cast their vote and have their voices heard.

The people of Haiti elected Mr. Rene Garcia Preval. The people of Haiti simply want what all democracy should afford: fairness, justice and equality.

Haiti is a poor country. Haiti deserves our support. Haiti deserves the support of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Haiti deserves bilateral support.

The people of Haiti want investment and trade. The people of Haiti do not deserve to have their will undermined by the powerful elite who are well connected to the power brokers in the U.S., Canada and France. We can encourage investment in Haiti and support fair wages and decent housing and public education for all of the children.

Mr. Preval is a smart, capable leader who loves Haiti. We need to support him and help him to develop Haiti.

Mr. FOLEY and I just returned from a trip to Haiti where we met with President-Elect Preval. President Preval was a gracious but determined host. President Preval recognizes that he has a great responsibility, but he is not deterred.

President Preval is hopeful and optimistic. And since his election, people are out cleaning the streets. The uniforms are back on the children. They are going to school. Business and commerce was going on in the marketplace. I have great hopes for Haiti.

When we spoke with Mr. Preval, he talked about investment. He wants to create jobs. He talked about the fact that they must have electricity. We must encourage support from the World Bank and from the International Monetary Fund and from our own country to help them get the electricity.

The people must have clean water. They need a new water system there. They do not want to spend their money on an army. They want a well-trained police force and community policing. There is much to be done. There is reconciliation to be had. But we are hopeful.

We congratulate the president and we thank the Members of Congress for all the support that they have given.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5½ minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT).

□ 1715

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Florida for yielding, and I really welcome the enthusiasm and the optimism that have been expressed by the Congresswoman from California and the gentleman from Florida.

I am pleased to cosponsor this resolution. However, I have served as an observer in past elections in Haiti, elections that prompted great hope, but resulted in great disappointment. So I believe for a moment it is important to reflect, and I would quote the words of Luigi Einaudi, who was tasked by the OAS to mediate between the opponents

of the former president of Haiti, Mr. Aristide, and I am going to quote his words.

This is a gentleman who knows Haiti well and Washington well: "Haiti is a tragedy, and it is a tragedy of partisanship and hate and hostility. These were divides among Haitians, and they are also divides among Americans because Haiti came to symbolize within the United States a point of friction between Democrats and Republicans that did not facilitate bipartisanship or stable policy or communication."

In the end, he was unsuccessful. Aristide was overthrown in February of 2004, and Haiti continued to descend into violence and despair. But it wasn't Einaudi that failed. Haiti's political class bears much of the responsibility for this tragedy because of their self-serving and cynical refusal to place nation over people in exchange for self-aggrandizement.

But here we also have our share of responsibility. A recent New York Times story entitled "Mixed U.S. Signals Helped Tilt Haiti Towards Chaos" should be essential reading for all of us, and I will insert this article into the RECORD.

Former U.S. Ambassador to Haiti, American Ambassador Dean Curran, once referred to the "chimeres of Washington." A chimere in Haiti is a thug hired to intimidate one's political opponents. And different Haitian political actors, both Aristide and his opposition, had their chimeres in Washington.

It has been my experience that there has been more advocacy than neutrality about Haiti on the part of the United States. Too often we join the zero-sum game of Haitian politics. We picked sides and supported them at the expense of Haiti and its long-suffering people.

For example, some here, working in coordination with Aristide's opponents, would place so-called "holds" on U.S. assistance in Haiti, blocking aid for the police, for the judicial system, for human rights observers, for election monitors; and Haiti's fragile institutions collapsed, starved from the outside and rotted from the inside.

I would note, and it is important to note this, that many of these holds were placed during the term of Rene Preval when he was the president in the past. Others who supported Aristide failed to recognize his shortcomings and deficiencies and failed to encourage him to put forth a positive vision for the Haitian people. The end result was that Haiti's fate was not only decided in Haiti, it was also decided here in Washington.

But now, with this most recent election, Haiti does have an opportunity to move past its past, and we have the same opportunity here in Washington. For Haiti to have a future, two things must happen: First, the Haitian political class must act like small "d" democrats and make a priority the needs of the Haitian people; and sec-

ond, Americans must put our differences aside and commit to a bipartisan policy of noninterference in Haiti's internal politics.

I want to participate in that. I have had conversations with groups whom I have had profound differences about Haiti with in the past, such as the International Republican Institute. And maybe I am naive, but I sense an emerging consensus that we must come together on the part of all who have an interest in Haiti and encourage a new and constructive approach.

I am not saying that the U.S. should abandon Haiti, far from it. In fact, we should increase our aid. But I would recommend that we should provide assistance through multilateral organizations like the United Nations.

Yesterday we met with Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who agrees that the international community must provide a deep and sustained commitment to Haiti. In fact, I believe that Haiti should be the first test case for the United Nations' new peace-building commission, and the U.S. should give it its full support. And I have to admit that for the first time I do see a glimmer of hope for Haiti, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to make that a real ambition.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I gladly yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), one of our most distinguished senior members of the Committee on International Relations, and certainly a champion of human rights and my dear friend.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentleman for yielding and for his leadership in the cause of democracy, peace, and justice throughout the world.

I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Resolution 353, which congratulates the people of Haiti on holding peaceful and democratic elections on February 7. And I want to thank Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS for her bold leadership and for bringing forth this resolution immediately in full support of the Haitian people and their right to once again decide who will lead their democracy and to restore the rule of law in Haiti.

In supporting this legislation, we also congratulate President-Elect Rene Garcia Preval, a man who, I am confident, will restore peace, human rights, and accountability throughout Haiti and within Haiti's government.

Mr. Speaker, with over 2.2 million Haitians, more than 60 percent of registered voters, participating in these elections, it is clear to me that the people of Haiti are ready for peace and willing to do whatever it takes, whatever it takes to restore and secure their democracy once again.

Since the undemocratic removal of former President Aristide in 2004, Haiti's health, education, and economic sectors have spiraled into ruin. During the last 2 years, unemployment reached a staggering 90 percent in

parts of Haiti. For months, schools remained closed and children feared kidnapping or death on the city streets. The only public hospitals that many of Haiti's poor could rely on were centers run by international organizations such as Doctors Without Borders or the International Red Cross. Public hospitals and government services were either closed or too dangerous to utilize. People feared kidnapping, assault, and even murder walking out of their homes and onto the streets.

However, the Haitian people have voted for a change, Mr. Speaker. Haiti now has an opportunity to set its own course through responsive government that puts people first. President Preval has demonstrated that he understands how to turn around Haiti's economy while still preserving the rights of all Haitians, especially Haiti's poor, and by raising the standard of living, increasing job opportunities and education for Haiti's poor.

During his first tenure, from 1996 to 2001, as president, Mr. Preval found ways to build hundreds of miles of road, dozens of schools, health centers. He transformed thousands of acres of land into peasants' hands and organized the two most famous and successful human rights trials in Haiti's history.

An international response, however, right now will be necessary in order to make Haiti's hopeful possibilities for a future a reality. That is why the Congressional Black Caucus, Haiti Task Force, the House International Relations Committee, Congresswoman WATERS, Mr. FOLEY, myself, all of us, Democrats and Republicans, in a bipartisan way are committed to making Haiti's future a bright one by supporting their duly-elected president.

Haiti will also need our financial support and technical assistance if it is to overcome the challenges it faces in its economy and its infrastructure and its ability to provide basic services to all Haitians. We must support a restoration of security by helping to get guns off the street and support an international effort to establish a national truth and reconciliation commission.

Also, we must support and move forward all of the trade efforts and aid efforts; we have got to increase these efforts, and also additional resources for fighting the HIV and AIDS pandemic, which Haiti has the highest rates in the Caribbean. These are items which are key to securing order and peace in Haiti, securing the people's choice.

And this is what happened now, the people have made a decision once again. The people's choice is Mr. Preval, and we have got to make sure that we help him to do everything he can to turn Haiti around. The Haitian people deserve no less.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, for their collegiality, I thank them very much.

I again thank the distinguished gentleman from American Samoa for his leadership, but as well the commitment that he brings to this Congress of internationalism and international cooperation. Likewise, my appreciation for my good friend ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN for the leadership she brings to this committee and, as well, her compassion for issues dealing with human rights.

I want us to be reminded of the fact that Haitians fought alongside Americans in the course of our freedom. So I want to applaud Congresswoman WATERS for knowing our history and, as well, appreciating the pivotal role that Haiti and Haitians play in the security of America and the friendship of America. I remind you again that when we were fighting for our freedom, Haitians were alongside of us fighting, shedding their blood, and allowing us to be free. So our American history and Haitian history are intertwined, and we have a legitimate reason for looking and ensuring the democracy, the justice, and the freedom of the people of Haiti.

Let me also acknowledge the fact that many times our interaction with Haiti has not been the best. I traveled to Haiti with the chairman of the Intelligence Committee and the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, Mr. CONYERS, and we traveled before the elections occurred, met with the interim government, met with many of the different party leaders and others seeking to have a fair election.

It was not a very easy trip. There were accusations. There were suggestions that the government was trying to keep some of the candidates off of the ballot.

What I will say about Mr. Preval is that he stayed the course. Even in the midst of all that turmoil, he continued to campaign. Even with threats against his candidacy, he continued to campaign.

I think we should appreciate as well the comfortable relationship that he has with former President Aristide. He does not bring hostility to his leadership, but at the same time he brings his own leadership, his own mantle, if you will, of guidance of the people of Haiti.

So I too join my voice in congratulating the soon-to-be president on his inauguration and hoping that we will help him establish an excellent police force, one that provides safety for the Haitian people.

And I would ask, as a member of the House Judiciary Committee, that we would join in the authorization and the encouragement of the Appropriations Committee to be able to provide that funding. I would ask that the Judiciary Committee, along with the appropriators appropriately associated with the authorizing committee, really focus in on assisting Preval, along with, of course, the Committee on Inter-

national Relations, in this whole question of law enforcement and a secure, trained police force. As well, the education of the children is important, clean water.

And I too believe that there is optimism as 2.2 million people voted on February 7. But we need to encourage trade; as well, we need to make sure that the Haitians who are in the United States feel safe to return. And if they do not feel safe, Mr. Speaker, I hope that as we look at immigration reform, we will add Haitian parity to the bill, which means that those who are in fear of their life who are still here in this country would have the opportunity to attain their status. Many of them are detainees because their particular status does not equate to other provisions, if you will, such as those in Cuba.

□ 1730

Let me also say that I hope that the extra money that the ranking member spoke of, \$50 million and more, will be added to the Haitian appropriations.

And then, of course, I hope that we will have a representative delegation with good intentions and good will that will visit and represent the United States as they attend the inauguration of Rene Preval.

Might I say that there is legislation going through the House that calls, offered by Congressman KUCINICH, of which I am one of the cosponsors, to establish a Department of Peace.

It is interesting that I would say that in the course of debating or congratulating Haiti and its election, but maybe that is a valuable department to have, because maybe we can then promote peace.

Might I just say in closure, I thank the Speaker very much, and I thank the gentlewoman, the manager of the bill. I congratulate the Haitians and I support H. Con. Res. 363; I congratulate the author, Ms. WATERS, and I look forward to better days for the Haitian people.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege and certainly an honor for me to give the rest of my time to our distinguished ranking member of our Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), to summarize the various aspects of this important legislation. And certainly I want to again thank my good friend, the gentlewoman from Florida, as the manager of this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WAMP). The gentleman from New York is recognized for 2 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from American Samoa. I will not take the full 2 minutes.

I just want to say that I am very excited that since I have become the ranking Democrat on the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of the International Relations Committee, this is actually the first bill that has come to the floor.

It is a very, very important bill, because as was mentioned by all of our

colleagues on both sides of the aisle, the relationship between the United States and Haiti is a very important one and a very special one.

And we have had lots of successes in the relationship, and also lots of failures through the years. I think that we want to, on a bipartisan basis, build on successes, and as everyone has mentioned before, the people of Haiti have spoken. They have had a democratic election. We talk a lot about democratic elections. We have it right here in Haiti in the Western Hemisphere, and overwhelmingly the people of Haiti have chosen Mr. Preval as their leader.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is incumbent upon those of us in the United States Congress and the administration and all of us working together to make sure that Mr. Preval succeeds and that more importantly the Haitian people succeed, and that democracy succeeds in Haiti, because it is not simply a matter of another country and what do we care whether it is a success or a failure. We do care and we should care, because Haiti is so close to the United States in terms of geography, because Haiti is right in our hemisphere, because Haiti is an important country, because there are many Haitian Americans in the United States with ties to the old country.

And that is why it is really just so important that we in the United States, and we talk about protecting democracy all over the world, and well we should. But I think right in our own back yard we have a lot to do.

So I want to thank Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA and all of the others who have spoken; Ms. WATERS, whose resolution this is; Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, with whom I have collaborated on so many important things, for all of their hard work and for all of us speaking of one mind here on both sides of the aisle that we want the U.S.-Haitian relationship to improve and to be successful.

Mr. Speaker, I support this resolution, I urge a unanimous vote of all our colleagues.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just wanted to thank Ms. WATERS for offering this resolution, for Mr. ENGEL, the ranking member on the subcommittee for his remarks, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA for his leadership on our International Relations Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I especially want to thank two staffers from each side of the aisle who have worked tirelessly not only on the issue of democracy for Haiti, but on all of the issues that impact Western Hemisphere: Mr. PAUL Oostburg, thank you, Mr. Oostburg, for your leadership.

And on our side, Ted Brennan. Thank you, Mr. Brennan, for your valuable work.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to heartily congratulate the people of Haiti on their recent election of President Préval on

February 7, 2006. It was a great triumph for the country to hold “free and fair” presidential and legislative elections. Reports were that the elections were peaceful and that 60 percent, over 2.2 million Haitians, many who stood in line for 6 hours or more, participated. This election is a great advancement of a return to normalcy for this great country and its stupendous citizens.

This is a pivotal point in history for Haiti and the world. I now call on the international community, with the U.S. in the lead, to support democracy in this determined country. I am hopeful that this first step will serve as the beginning of national reconciliation of democracy as well as social and economic development for Haiti.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in favor of H. Con. Res. 353.

I think it is important for this House to recognize the Republic of Haiti for recently holding successful, democratic elections, and to congratulate President-elect René García Préal on his electoral victory.

Haiti is the world’s oldest Black republic and the second-oldest republic in the Western Hemisphere, after the United States. While street violence, kidnappings, and political instability have plagued Haiti in recent years, and are still threats, the democratic will of the people persevered and elections were embraced by the nation.

The presidential and legislative elections on February 7, 2006 saw unprecedented voter turnout. A member of my staff traveled to Haiti as an election monitor. Many Haitians were required to walk for miles to their designated voting centers and then were forced to wait for hours in line; nonetheless, more than 60 percent of those registered exercised their right to vote and participated in electing a new, democratic government.

This election marks a significant moment in Haiti; it not only serves as the basis of hope along the road to democracy, but also serves as a testament to the resolve and character of the Haitian people during their long struggle for peace, reconciliation, and prosperity.

Now is the time for the United States to commit itself to long-term support to Haiti. The task facing President-elect Préal is daunting; he must establish a new government, reform the judiciary, establish and maintain domestic order, create jobs, jumpstart the economy, and end Haiti’s endemic malnutrition and crushing poverty. In the past, this Congress has turned a deaf ear to Haiti’s needs—specifically by not passing the Haiti Economic Recovery Opportunity Act, which I have introduced in this Congress, along with Senator MIKE DEWINE in the Senate. It is my hope that President-elect Préal’s election will mark a new, more supportive era in Haitian-American relations, in this Congress and in this administration.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 353.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o’clock and 36 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1833

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan) at 6 o’clock and 33 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

- H.R. 4882, by the yeas and nays;
- S. 2120, by the yeas and nays.

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL VISITOR CENTER ENFORCEMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 4882, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4882, as amended, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 404, nays 4, not voting 24, as follows:

[Roll No. 68]

YEAS—404

Abercrombie	Bonner	Chabot
Ackerman	Bono	Chandler
Aderholt	Boozman	Chocola
Akin	Boren	Clay
Alexander	Boucher	Cleaver
Allen	Boustany	Clyburn
Andrews	Bradley (NH)	Coble
Baca	Brady (PA)	Cole (OK)
Bachus	Brady (TX)	Conaway
Baird	Brown (OH)	Conyers
Baker	Brown (SC)	Cooper
Baldwin	Brown, Corrine	Costa
Barrett (SC)	Brown-Waite,	Costello
Barrow	Ginny	Cramer
Bartlett (MD)	Burgess	Crenshaw
Barton (TX)	Burton (IN)	Cubin
Bass	Butterfield	Cuellar
Bean	Buyer	Culberson
Becerra	Calvert	Cummings
Berkley	Camp (MI)	Davis (AL)
Berman	Campbell (CA)	Davis (CA)
Berry	Cannon	Davis (IL)
Biggert	Cantor	Davis (KY)
Bilirakis	Capito	Davis (TN)
Bishop (GA)	Capps	Davis, Jo Ann
Bishop (NY)	Cardin	Davis, Tom
Bishop (UT)	Cardoza	DeFazio
Blackburn	Carnahan	DeGette
Blunt	Carson	Delahunt
Boehkert	Carter	DeLauro
Boehner	Case	DeLay
Bonilla	Castle	Dent

Diaz-Balart, L.	King (IA)	Pickering
Diaz-Balart, M.	King (NY)	Pitts
Dicks	Kingston	Platts
Dingell	Kirk	Poe
Doggett	Kline	Pombo
Doolittle	Knollenberg	Pomeroy
Doyle	Kolbe	Porter
Drake	Kucinich	Price (GA)
Dreier	Kuhl (NY)	Price (NC)
Duncan	LaHood	Pryce (OH)
Edwards	Langevin	Putnam
Ehlers	Lantos	Radanovich
Emanuel	Larsen (WA)	Rahall
Emerson	Larson (CT)	Ramstad
Engel	Latham	Rangel
English (PA)	LaTourette	Regula
Eshoo	Leach	Rehberg
Etheridge	Lee	Reichert
Everett	Levin	Renzi
Farr	Lewis (CA)	Reyes
Fattah	Lewis (GA)	Reynolds
Feeney	Lewis (KY)	Rogers (AL)
Ferguson	Linder	Rogers (KY)
Filner	Lipinski	Rogers (MI)
Flake	LoBiondo	Rohrabacher
Foley	Lofgren, Zoe	Ros-Lehtinen
Fortenberry	Lowey	Ross
Fossella	Lucas	Rothman
Frank (MA)	Lungren, Daniel	Roybal-Allard
Franks (AZ)	E.	Royce
Frelinghuysen	Lynch	Ruppersberger
Gallegly	Mack	Ryan (OH)
Garrett (NJ)	Maloney	Ryan (WI)
Gerlach	Manzullo	Ryun (KS)
Gilchrest	Markey	Sabo
Gingrey	Marshall	Salazar
Gohmert	Matheson	Sánchez, Linda
Gonzalez	Matsui	T.
Goode	McCarthy	Sanchez, Loretta
Goodlatte	McCaul (TX)	Sanders
Granger	McCollum (MN)	Saxton
Graves	McCotter	Schakowsky
Green (WI)	McCreery	Schiff
Green, Al	McDermott	Schmidt
Green, Gene	McGovern	Schwartz (PA)
Grijalva	McHenry	Schwarz (MI)
Gutierrez	McHugh	Scott (GA)
Gutknecht	McIntyre	Scott (VA)
Hall	McKeon	Sensenbrenner
Harman	McKinney	Serrano
Harris	McMorris	Sessions
Hart	McNulty	Shadegg
Hastings (FL)	Meehan	Shaw
Hastings (WA)	Meek (FL)	Shays
Hayes	Meeks (NY)	Sherman
Hayworth	Melancon	Sherwood
Hefley	Mica	Shimkus
Hensarling	Michaud	Shuster
Hерger	Millender	Simmons
Herseth	McDonald	Simpson
Higgins	Miller (FL)	Skelton
Hinchey	Miller (MI)	Slaughter
Hinojosa	Miller (NC)	Smith (NJ)
Hobson	Miller, Gary	Smith (TX)
Hoekstra	Miller, George	Smith (WA)
Holden	Mollohan	Snyder
Holt	Moore (KS)	Sodrel
Honda	Moore (WI)	Solis
Hooley	Moran (KS)	Souder
Hostettler	Moran (VA)	Spratt
Hoyer	Murphy	Stark
Hulshof	Murtha	Stearns
Hunter	Myrick	Strickland
Hyde	Nadler	Stupak
Inglis (SC)	Napolitano	Sullivan
Inslee	Neal (MA)	Tancredo
Israel	Neugebauer	Tanner
Issa	Ney	Tauscher
Jackson (IL)	Northup	Taylor (MS)
Jackson-Lee	Norwood	Taylor (NC)
(TX)	Nussle	Thomas
Jefferson	Oberstar	Thompson (CA)
Jindal	Obey	Thompson (MS)
Johnson (CT)	Oliver	Thornberry
Johnson (IL)	Osborne	Tiahrt
Johnson, E. B.	Otter	Tiberi
Johnson, Sam	Owens	Tierney
Jones (NC)	Oxley	Towns
Jones (OH)	Pallone	Turner
Kanjorski	Pascrell	Udall (CO)
Kaptur	Pastor	Udall (NM)
Keller	Paul	Upton
Kelly	Payne	Van Hollen
Kennedy (MN)	Pearce	Velázquez
Kennedy (RI)	Pelosi	Vislosky
Kildee	Pence	Walden (OR)
Kilpatrick (MI)	Peterson (MN)	Walsh
Kind	Peterson (PA)	Wamp
	Petri	