

today and tomorrow in Congress. As the chairman of the Higher Education Subcommittee, I am intimately familiar with this legislation.

This legislation expands college access for millions of American students by strengthening the Pell Grant program and by strengthening Perkins student loans.

We strengthen the Pell Grant program by allowing Pell Grants to be used year round for the first time in history and by increasing the maximum award to \$6,000, the largest amount in history.

We strengthen Perkins student loans by reauthorizing them and providing a way for low-income students, up to 10 million of them, to get fixed, low-interest rates at 5 percent.

Perkins loans and Pell Grants are the passport out of poverty for millions of worthy young students. So do not believe the hype from the critics of this legislation. Here is some straight talk: not a single student in America will receive less financial aid under this bill, not one.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the higher education reauthorization bill today.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY?

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, whatever happened to the Republicans who were fiscally responsible? I think they must have left town after President Bush came to Washington in 2001.

In January of that year, thanks to the fiscal policies of the Clinton administration, we were expecting a \$5.6 trillion budget surplus over 10 years. Instead, thanks to the fiscal policies of President Bush and the Republican "Rubber Stamp" Congress, that \$5.6 trillion surplus has been turned into a \$3.3 trillion deficit.

President Bush has yet to propose a balanced budget, and yet the Republicans do not seem to mind. They keep signing off on the budget proposals, ignoring fiscal discipline.

Because of their reckless borrow-and-spend policy, Republicans were forced to increase the debt limit earlier this year for the fourth time in 5 years, raising it to nearly \$9 trillion. We are currently borrowing more than \$600,000 a minute, much of it from foreign countries such as China and Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Speaker, if House Republicans are serious about fiscal discipline, they will stop rubber-stamping President Bush's failed fiscal policies.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 609, COLLEGE ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2005

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I

call up House Resolution 741 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 741

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 609) to amend and extend the Higher Education Act of 1965. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of the Rules Committee Print dated March 22, 2006. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. After disposition of the amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules, the Committee of the Whole shall rise without motion. No further consideration of the bill shall be in order except pursuant to a subsequent order of the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA). The gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. 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.

H. Res. 741 provides a structured rule of 1 hour of general debate on H.R. 609, the College Access and Opportunity Act of 2005, and makes in order 15 separate amendments to that legislation.

I would like to point out that this bill has been significantly discussed in committee markups. Seventy-nine amendments were discussed; half as many, as well, were discussed in the subcommittee markup. Nonetheless, 117 amendments were also filed with the Rules Committee, many of them by members of the committee, some re-treads, but some allegedly were rewritten

after the committee markup took place.

Because so many amendments have been introduced and many of them are those first impression-type amendments, the Rules Committee will be issuing a separate, second rule at a later date that will allow for consideration of additional amendments to H.R. 609.

Providing for two separate rules in this manner will allow the Rules Committee some additional time it needs to adequately review the large number of amendments that were submitted, guard against potential duplicative amendments, violation of House rules, ensure germaneness and also eliminate those that would violate budgetary rules.

I hope that in this process we will ensure an orderly debate on the key issues of this particular bill with the proposed two structured rules coming to us.

This two-step process will also allow many of the sponsors of those amendments some additional time to perhaps redraft their language, with closer consultation with the Parliamentarian and the relevant committees of jurisdiction.

The Rules Committee did work hard to listen to the Member testimony and consider the amendments that were proposed. What is filed in this particular rule are 15 amendments, seven of which are Democrat or bipartisan amendments which provide for a wide range of debate on many key aspects of the higher education program and policy. I think it is indeed a fair rule.

In 1965, the original Higher Education Act was proposed in order to provide assistance to a high number of students to fulfill a dream of a college education. Since that time, this bill and reauthorizations of this bill have been used for some other purposes.

One of the things that is positive about the bill before us is an effort to refocus on the primary purpose and the primary goal of this bill as it was originally applied, and that is public assistance to more students, period.

It is an effort on the part of the committee to try and make sure that people have this opportunity to go to college. As such, they reauthorize programs like TRIO and its associate programs like Upward Bound and GEAR UP to take kids who, by virtue of their socioeconomic status or perhaps their cultural background, are given an opportunity to advance to a college degree maybe for the first time to fulfill that particular dream.

□ 1045

I realize that my brothers and I are the first ones in my family to have actually graduated from college, and to allow that for many of these kids who will sometimes be the first of their families to have that experience in college and to graduate from college is significant.

The committee reauthorized the student Perkins loan grants, which also

recognizes the need of a different strain of students to be able to make it through college with the different niche that they provide. It has recognized the role of proprietary schools without automatic recognition but understanding the niche that it plays now as well as in the future.

Most significantly, it reauthorizes the Pell Grants. It does so in a way that expands the cap, simplifies the rules, changes the eligibility so a greater number of individuals will be eligible and participate in this particular program. It adds new emphasis on the highest-achieving first- and second-year students, which in the past have had the greatest need but maybe have not had the proportional advantage of this particular program. It accelerates the opportunity for course work to be done in a way that helps the students to actually get through their college careers. In essence, it is one of those programs that does well.

I hope as we proceed on the discussion of this rule as well as the underlying bill that we do not lose sight of the purpose of this particular bill, which is to provide assistance for more students. And I also hope that we do not lose sight that we are dealing with the bill at hand, not other extraneous issues.

The original act, the original act never intended that the Federal Government pay for all of college education but rather was an assistance, a helping hand to those wishing to go to school and allowing those students themselves to earn their own way in the higher education world.

I feel I have a personal stake in this particular concept. I have five kids, four of whom have been in college, unfortunately, at the same time. Since 1998, I have had the wonderful opportunity of funding multiple students in college simultaneously. And if my third kid goes to graduate school, I will have a chance of adding the fifth kid in college at the same time in both law schools, undergraduate work, as well as perhaps graduate work, and I did it all on a schoolteacher's salary.

Both I and my credit cards understand the significance of this particular piece of legislation, and I am also convinced that it is a remarkably good balance by reauthorizing existing programs while at the same time increasing accountability for Federal dollars spent, increasing consumer choices, creating incentives for institutions to control tuition costs, and actually increasing the overall number of low- and middle-income students who will be receiving that particular assistance.

We will probably hear, as the discussion unfolds, both in this rule and the next rule, of many programs trying to institute social engineering projects into this particular bill; perhaps to expand the role in the Federal Government at the State and local education prerogatives; perhaps those amendments to micromanage institutions;

perhaps those that will change the authorization levels in an unrealistic fashion. It will be an interesting debate. But what I hope we do not lose track of, again, is that this bill makes progress in helping kids receive a college education, and progress is always paid at some particular price.

It also does not diminish the other role besides assistance in the cost of education and college, which is tuition increases. By providing specific incentives to schools to hold the line on tuition increases, by simplifying the process and by studying this issue and reporting back, it does make a significant stand in this particular area without forgetting that the Federal Government is a partner in this situation. The institutions of higher learning belong to the States and the private and religious organizations. We are simply exercising a partnership with them.

I have to commend the former chairman of the Education Workforce Services Committee, our current majority leader, Mr. BOEHNER, for his efforts in trying to work across the aisle to come up with a good bill. I also congratulate the new chairman, Mr. McKEON, for his hard work in seeing this bill through to this point. I also congratulate many Members of the minority. Many of their ideas and provisions are incorporated in the base bill, 609, that we have before us.

Forty-eight hours ago, this was a good bipartisan bill, and I am under the assumption that, when we finish our work and go home Saturday, we will also recognize that we have passed a good bipartisan bill.

In conclusion, I ask the Members to support this first rule and vote in favor of this resolution. We will have as a body two chances at the plate in this particular bill. And as Satchel Page used to say: "Pitch strikes. Home plate don't move."

This is a good bill, and it ain't going to move either. With that, I hope we continue to make progress in moving this important piece of legislation forward at an orderly pace.

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

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Utah for yielding me this time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, in our country, education has long been viewed as the doorway to opportunity. Unfortunately, if we pass this rule and the underlying legislation, we will be closing this door for many.

Over the past year, I have sat down with students at Sacramento State University in my hometown of Sacramento. These young people are so talented and so filled with the possibility of tomorrow, but they are all concerned about the cuts to financial aid and their ability to finish college. This legislation will not address their

concerns and, actually, will probably increase them.

The inability to afford college was less of an issue for my generation. When I was growing up in California, there was never a concern that I couldn't go to college. But this is not the case today. In all likelihood, my parents would have a very difficult time putting together a package that would allow me to go to college because, across the Nation, the average tuition and fees at 4-year public colleges have risen 40 percent since 2001 when adjusted for inflation. Yet when also adjusted for inflation, the maximum Pell Grant last year was worth \$800 less than it was in 1975, and this bill only raises the authorizing level by a mere \$200 over 6 years.

The spending cuts this Congress passed earlier this year represented the single largest cut to the Nation's Federal student aid programs ever. Sadly, this bill fails to reverse that trend, and it puts college even further out of reach for many. For the students at Sac State, UC Davis, and across the Nation, this legislation will impact their ability to earn a degree as well as their future, and ultimately it will impact this Nation's future.

Today, this country is a world leader by nearly every economic indicator, and our standard of living is without equal. But that didn't happen by accident. Our predecessors made a decision to make the critical investment in education and ensure access to an affordable education. While we seem to be increasing the barriers to a college education, we should not doubt for a moment that our international competitors are making that mistake. China, India, South Korea and others are making the investment to produce the intellectual capital they will need to boost their economic growth and catch up to the United States.

College financial aid is an investment in America's economic strength and its workforce. If the barriers to a college education continue to increase, America's preeminence in the world economy will be at risk. If we want to ensure we retain our international preeminence, we must make the investment in our most important engine of economic growth: the American people. They are our Nation's most valuable resource.

We must make college truly affordable for every student who has the ability and the will to work hard, study and continue to make America the world's economic leader. But we will not be doing that with this legislation. And as we bring this bill to the House floor, we are sending a very loud signal that partisanship has a higher priority in this Congress than working together to address the needs of the Nation.

In previous Congresses, the higher education reauthorization has come to the floor with a rule simply requiring the preprinting of amendments, certainly a far more open process than today. Those rules passed each time by

voice vote. It allowed healthy debate on one of the most important bills this Congress considers, because we must get it right. But we don't see the same rule in this Congress. Instead, the Rules Committee chose to shut out Members' ideas by issuing this first restrictive rule late last night, which is likely to be followed by a second rule that also shuts Members out of the process.

Once again, we see the majority limiting the ideas that can be debated on the House floor. It will only add to this bill's flawed consideration, and ultimately, it will block efforts to correct its misguided priorities.

So I urge my colleagues to vote down this rule and the underlying legislation so we can return to the floor with a higher education bill that does make the investment in our young people and our Nation.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER), the chairman of the subcommittee of jurisdiction dealing with higher education issues.

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I rise today in support of the rule and in support of H.R. 609, the College Access and Opportunity Act, which will reauthorize the Higher Education Act.

Don't believe the hype from the critics of this legislation. Here is some straight talk: not a single student in America will receive less financial aid under this bill. Not one. This legislation actually expands college access for millions of American students by strengthening the Pell Grant program and by reauthorizing the Perkins student loan program.

I will focus my comments this morning on the heart of this legislation, which is Perkins loans and Pell Grants. Both of these are worthy programs which enjoy broad bipartisan support.

As someone from humble beginnings, who would not have been able to go to college without Pell Grants and student loans, and as chairman of the subcommittee with jurisdiction over higher education, I am a strong supporter of both Perkins loans and Pell Grants.

Let me first discuss Perkins loans. This legislation reauthorizes the Perkins student loan program, a critical program that offers financial assistance to over 10 million low-income students. The Perkins program helps our neediest students borrow extra money for college at a fixed, low 5 percent interest rate. In this bill, we increase the loan limits in the Perkins program from \$4,000 up to \$5,500 for undergraduates and from \$6,000 to \$8,000 for graduate students, thereby increasing access to college.

I will next discuss Pell Grants. This legislation strengthens the Pell Grant program by authorizing a maximum Pell Grant for \$6,000, the largest amount in the history of our country,

and by providing year-round Pell Grant aid for students attending school throughout the year, the first time we have done that in the history of this country.

Mr. Speaker, programs like Perkins student loans and Pell Grants are the passports out of poverty for millions of American students each year. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule and vote "yes" on the College Access and Opportunity Act in order to help millions of college students be able to afford to go to college.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN).

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California, my colleague, for yielding me this time, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this rule and on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, scarcely 2 months ago, the Republican majority voted to cut \$12 billion from Federal student aid programs. That is what they did. And not a single member of the Democratic minority voted for those cuts. This raid on student aid represents the single largest cut in the history of these critical Federal programs.

Mr. Speaker, it is wrong to force America's college students and their families to pay the price for the majority's irresponsible management of our Nation's budget. It is wrong to make students and families who are already struggling to pay for college foot the bill for tax cuts for the super-rich.

□ 1100

In February, President Bush submitted his budget for fiscal year 2007, which this House is likely to take up next week and which continues to cut America's Federal investment in higher education.

For the sixth year in a row, President Bush has broken his promise to raise the maximum Pell Grant to \$5,100. Instead, his budget freezes the maximum level at \$4,050, well below what is needed for low-income students to pay for college. Once again, the President's budget eliminates Federal funding for Perkins loans and sharply cuts back funding for campus-based grants like the SEOG and work study.

Financially needy students are further denied opportunities to achieve a college education by a budget that eliminates programs that directly help them prepare for college, including GEAR UP and Upward Bound.

So here we are today, preparing to bring H.R. 609 to the House floor. Does this bill restore the purchasing power of the Pell Grant? No, it does not. Instead, it increases the maximum Pell Grant by just a measly \$200 over 6 years.

When Pell Grant first began, it covered 84 percent of the cost at a 4-year public college. Today, because of inadequate funding, the Pell Grant covers only 42 percent of the cost, forcing millions of students to go deep into debt,

work long hours, or forget college altogether. Does this bill guarantee that only the minor authorized increase for the Pell Grant in H.R. 609 will actually be funded at this level? No, it does not. Assuming Republican priorities remain the same, we will continue to see budgets and appropriations that fall far short of what is needed to make college affordable for all of America's qualified students.

Mr. Speaker, there is still time for the Republican leadership to do the right thing. We can strengthen and improve this bill, but only if the Rules Committee makes in order amendments like the Miller-Kildee alternative.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, as written, misses the mark. We must help more of our students get to college and afford to stay there. If we fail to truly make this our number one priority, then we fail our students, our families, our communities and the Nation, and we inflict long-term damage on America's ability to compete, our economy and America's future prosperity.

What a rotten legacy this Republican Congress is leaving future generations: enormous Federal debt and the slashing of important vital programs to give all Americans the opportunity to pursue higher education.

I would say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, your priorities are wrong. Your priorities will do damage to our students and will undercut our Nation's ability to remain an economic superpower. You have already slashed away at Federal funding for elementary and secondary education despite all the new Federal mandates that have been imposed on our schools by No Child Left Behind. Now here we are shortchanging higher education. When is enough enough?

Don't tell us you do not have the money. You have money for tax breaks for Donald Trump and the super-rich, but you don't have money when it comes to helping working families.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to my colleagues that if education is your priority, then you need to vote against this bill, send this bill back and force this Republican majority to do what is right. Do not listen to the rhetoric about somehow we are improving Pell Grants and we are providing more assistance to our younger people. The fact of the matter is the purchasing power of Pell Grants is at an all-time low. We could do better.

Without significant changes in this bill, I regret that I cannot support H.R. 609. I urge my colleagues to vote against the rule. This should be an open rule. If anything should be debated on this House floor, it should be education.

Last night, we had many Members offer amendments, and here we are with a restrictive rule. We should spend a week on education. We should not be rushing this in a day or two. Let's spend a week. It is that important. I urge my colleagues to vote

against the rule and vote against the bill.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Massachusetts and his discussion of the budget issues we will be debating next week. It is a good primer for that particular issue.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the chairman of the Rules Committee, to speak about this bill at hand.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my friend, the great history professor, who understands the importance of education and for his stellar service on the Rules Committee and his commitment to ensuring that we have a good piece of legislation.

At the outset, let me say that we obviously have seen Chairman McKEON work in a bipartisan way reaching out to my fellow Californian, Mr. MILLER, from Martinez, California, who has also a passionate commitment to dealing with the issue of education.

I have to say when I sat in the Rules Committee yesterday, listening to this debate, I was struck by the fact that my friend, Mr. MILLER, was regularly nodding his head in agreement with Mr. McKEON when he talked about issue after issue that had been addressed by the majority on the committee. I hope very much, as we proceed with this process, that we are able to once again enjoy the bipartisan support and commitment we had on this issue about 36 hours ago.

I also want to say to my friend from Massachusetts who raised the issue of the rule, this is the first of two rules. We have begun with this rule, and we will be providing an opportunity for more of our colleagues to offer amendments as we move on with this debate, which is not going to be a 1-day debate. We understand how important this issue is.

I also want to express my appreciation to Mr. McKEON for addressing some of the major concerns that have been brought forward by the leaders of private schools, private colleges and universities. One of the things that we need to recognize in our society is we have pluralism in education. We have spectacular public and private schools of learning. I believe, as we look at the education challenge, it is important for us to take the steps to ensure the strength of both of those. A number of concerns that have been raised by many of my friends in the academic world have been effectively addressed.

Mr. Speaker, it was 6 years ago this month that 15 European heads of state met in Lisbon, Portugal, and pledged to make the European Union the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010. By their own account, the EU has acknowledged that that goal has failed and will not be accomplished.

The German economist, Andreas Schleicher, published a report entitled,

"The Economics of Knowledge: Why Education is Key For Europe's Success." As the title indicates, Schleicher concludes in a knowledge-based, innovation-driven economy, education is the linchpin. He also concludes that right now Europe is lagging well behind the United States. He ranks the world's top 20 universities and finds that the EU is home to only two of those.

I am happy to say that the United States is home to 17 of them, including six in California, and one, the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, of which I am particularly proud.

Schleicher makes it clear that without a substantial investment in education in the high-tech and knowledge-based fields, the European Union will not only fail to reach its goal of having the most competitive economy by 2010, it will continue to fall further and further behind. The report was meant to be a wake-up call for Europeans, but I believe it should be a wake-up call for us as Americans.

We lead the global economy in growth, fueled by the power of our innovation. We are home to the world's best universities where today's students train for tomorrow's workforce, where creative thinkers conduct research and develop new technologies. But as a dynamic, fast-paced, highly competitive economy, we know better than anyone that complacency and stagnation are economic death knells. We cannot assume that today's competitiveness ensures tomorrow's success.

If we want to continue to be the global economic leader, we must expand our investment in education. We must better prepare students for the rigorous work that the high-tech workforce demands. We must better equip teachers to provide the educational foundation that our students need. And, Mr. Speaker, we must ensure that our institutions of higher learning continue to be the hotbeds of research where new ideas are tested, new methods are discovered and new technologies are developed.

I believe that H.R. 609, the College Access and Opportunity Act, which we are going to be considering, helps us to accomplish each of those goals. It is a critical component of our agenda to enhance the competitiveness of the U.S. economy, and it is necessary to ensure that the next generation of American workers does not find itself reading reports on our lack of top universities and our inability to compete in the global marketplace.

I urge my colleagues to support this rule, and as we go through this amendment process, specifically addressing concerns that I raised, that we will take on in the manager's amendment, I urge my colleagues to, in a bipartisan way, support this very, very important legislation.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND).

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

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, there is very little I can disagree within what the gentleman from California said in his prior statement. But if you really want a bipartisan process to move forward in shaping what is perhaps the most important piece of legislation that is going to be coming out of the Congress this year, the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, then open up the process, both in committee for those of us serving on the committee with regard to the ideas that we want to share and improve with this bill, but also on the House floor today and tomorrow.

Last night, we had a Rules process where many of us went forward to testify on various amendments that we wanted to offer. Instead, today, we get a very restrictive rule with very limited amendments that will be considered over the next couple of days. We should have a much broader debate in regards to the education bill before us, rather than the restrictive rule that is before us today.

I agree that we need to be innovative and creative as a society, not only to grow the economy, but for national security implications. If the gentleman wants us to remain innovative and creative as a country, then let us do it with this bill. Let us invest in these areas; and this is the vehicle by which to do it.

Today, China is graduating nine times the number of engineers than we do. Last year, China graduated more English-speaking engineers. It is not as if we do not know this is happening. The studies are coming in. The National Academy of Sciences just produced a report "Rising Above the Gathering Storm." The Glenn Commission that met years before submitted a report called "Before It is Too Late," citing the difficulties we will face given the major education investments that countries like China and India are making in their future, in their students. And yet we have just token recognition of that in this important vehicle, the higher education bill. We can do a lot better.

I believe the amendments offered last night were offered in good faith in an attempt to craft a more bipartisan bill. The fact that so many of us are excluded from offering them, even having a discussion about many of these important amendments on the floor, is a disgrace to the process.

My friend from Massachusetts is exactly right. We should be debating this bill for a week. We should open it up and allow everyone on the committee and off the committee to have some input and say on our most important legislation this year. I hope we can go back and address that. I encourage a no vote on this Rule.

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

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, traditionally, the higher education bill has been an opportunity for this Nation to pause and think about the role of higher education over the coming years in American society, in America's economy, in America's national security. Every 4 or 5 years we reauthorize that act. That is not what happened this time, and that is why you have opposition to this bill across the higher education community, across America from every sector, because we did not do that.

Instead, the higher education bill was hijacked. It was hijacked by those in the Republican Party that wanted to take the savings from the student aid accounts and give them to the oil companies and to the energy companies for their tax breaks. To continue to pay for the tax breaks for the wealthiest people in this country, they hijacked those moneys that America's families and students have been paying over the years, the excessive fees and excessive rates that they have been paying, and rather than reinvest them in America's future, rather than reinvest them in the institutions of higher education, in the families and students who are attending those institutions who are trying to get those advanced degrees to participate, they simply took that money 3 months ago and walked off with it. And now what we have here are the leftovers, the leftovers that state lofty principles and ideals, but fund none of them.

The Budget Committee is slashing education funding. The caps have suggested that they want cuts beyond what the President has suggested in his budget, and that is the status of higher education in America today.

What does it mean? Members recall Mr. DREIER talked about the EU coming to some conclusions. You do not have to go to the EU. Just listen to what Americans, who are thinking about the subject, who have a great stake in the outcome have been telling this Congress for a number of years, and this Congress has turned a deaf ear to those individuals under Republican leadership.

□ 1115

Whether it is the American Academy of Sciences, whether it is the Council of Graduate Schools, whether it is the American Electronics Association, whether it is Tech Net, whether it is the bioscience companies, all of these people have paraded to Washington and said one thing: you must reinvest in the R&D and in fellowships and in graduate school programs for science, engineering and mathematics. It is not being done. It is not being done. We

recognized and we have been warned of the need to reinvest in the greatest partnership ever created in the history of the world, the greatest public-private partnership that was the result of President Kennedy's decision to send a person to the Moon and to bring them back safely. It was more than a Moon shot. It was an investment in the best and the brightest in America. Tens of thousands of fellowships were given to individuals. They didn't have to go beg for a loan. They didn't have to think about working during the summer or on Easter vacation or student break. No, they concentrated on the science and the engineering, and America met its goal. And we have been living off that legacy now for 30 years.

But everybody in that field, betting their money, their company's money, their venture capitalist money has told us the time has come to reinvest. That is not what this bill does. This bill just passes on as if nothing has changed in America. And yet, members of this committee, Members of this House have traveled to the Pacific Rim. They see the new institutions being created in India and South Korea and China. They see institutions that are attracting some of the best and brightest minds from America to those institutions. They see the investment being made by the private sector of worldwide companies, American companies, because of that kind of investment that is being made there.

But this bill doesn't address that. This bill is just status quo. This bill doesn't create new fellowships. This bill doesn't create new opportunities for people to pursue those degrees. This bill simply adds to the debt and the cost, because when I say "this bill," understand I talk about both bills. You split them for the convenience of what you wanted to do with your raid on student aid. But this is the higher ed bill. The moneys were skimmed off in the name of the oil companies. The moneys were skimmed off in the name of tax cuts to the wealthy, so we don't have the ability to make that investment that we have been warned about by the leading companies, by the leading people who have been thinking about this, by various institutions about the investment that America needs to make.

So we have a bill now that really doesn't do much of anything. It pretends that it sort of increases Pell Grants, but as we know, the Pell Grant has continued to lose value. Yes, they say, well, we put more money in it every year. That is because more students, tragically, are eligible for the Pell Grant because they don't have the family income. And we now see that the Pell Grant now covers the lowest percentage of costs for those students who have Pell Grants going to school; it has dropped from 41 percent. It covered 41 percent of those costs in 2000. It is now down; it will be down to 25 percent by 2010.

So the trend line is horrible. The trend line is horrible for those students most in need, those families most in need. More and more of them are showing up to get the Pell Grant, but they are not getting enough money to cover the costs of their college education. The trend line is horrible. And the number of students who are pursuing graduate degrees in science, math and engineering, it is working against the American economy and American security. But this bill doesn't address that.

The Higher Education Act has lost its place in the priorities of this Congress and the priorities of this Nation about the future of education, and that is a tragedy. That is a tragedy for those students who will be saddled with higher costs because of the increase in interest rates, with higher fees. Their parents will be saddled with higher costs. Those who will choose to take out direct loans to try to reduce the cost will find out they are paying fees now.

And so that is what the Republicans decided. Their idea, when every indicator suggests that college costs are getting out of the reach of America's families and students and workers, their idea was to increase the cost to those families and to their students. It is just unacceptable. It was unacceptable 3 months ago, and it is unacceptable today. This bill should be returned to committee, and we should initiate the debate that this country demands and that this country needs in terms of the future of these students, our economy and our national security. That is what this higher education bill should be about. It should not be about the leftovers after the largest cut in student aid accounts in history have already been pulled off 2 months ago.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. McKEON), the former subcommittee chairman who dealt with this issue, and now the chairman of the full committee who has brought this bill to us and done a remarkable job in getting us to this position so far.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding the time, and I appreciate the work he is doing on this rule.

Just a little history, Mr. Speaker. You know, we have been working on this higher education reauthorization bill now for 3 years, and we have been doing it in a bipartisan way. What the other side wants to focus on is something that took place a few months ago. And what we did, we passed a Deficit Reduction Act to try to help the taxpayers of the country against further increasing deficits. And what we did in that bill was we lowered loan fees to students. We set higher loan limits for students in their first 2 years of college, which is when they have the greatest problem in staying in, when we have the greatest dropouts. We wanted to help those that are trying to get on the ladder of success to achieve

the American Dream. We provided grant aid for high-achieving, low-income students, which is the purpose of the Higher Education Act, to help the lower-income students to have greater accessibility to a college education. And we simplified the financial aid process, again, trying to help those who have the most needs to get into the system. We provided taxpayer protections. What we did was we reduced the excess subsidies to lenders. There was a loophole that was put in the law years ago. We reduced that, eliminated that loophole that provided an increased subsidy to lenders. We improved risk sharing. We added accountability to administrative funds, and we provided protection and prevention against loan default, all against the lenders, to help strengthen the program for students.

As I mentioned, we have been working on this in a bipartisan basis, and up until yesterday, that effort was moving forward in committee and subcommittee and full committee. We addressed over a hundred amendments from the other side of the aisle. And since the passage, months ago, in committee, we have continued to work with the other side. We have a lengthy manager's amendment. Everything that is in that manager's amendment has been approved by the other side. I have pages of amendments, things that we have put in the bill to satisfy the other side. And we were, as I said, working together, until yesterday when they said they had decided, and I can only assume it is for political reasons because it didn't come up until then, they decided that they were going to go back and talk about something that happened months ago, rather than what is in this bill, the good things that we have in this bill to make college education more affordable, more accessible, more accountable to parents and students in this Nation.

Our goal is to further the process that was put in place 40 years ago when the Higher Education Act was passed, to give all of the people in this country the opportunity to move forward, to get a college education, to improve themselves so that we can compete on a global basis.

I led a congressional trip last year to China, because we are concerned about worldwide competitiveness, and we do things in this bill to help make us more competitive and to expand access and accessibility for our students. And I feel good about what we have done in this work. I feel badly that we have had this, for whatever reason, change of tone and attitude on the other side. And I hope that we can continue to reach out to the other side, ask them to continue to work with us, and that is why we are going to have another rule later today. Those who want to work with us, that want to have an amendment in the bill that can support the bill to move forward, this is a long process. What we are working on today

is not the end. It is a further step in the process. We will get this bill passed on the floor tomorrow. Hopefully, the other body will pass a bill, we will go to conference, we will continue to work to improve the process. That is the democratic process that we are buying into and instead, all we are hearing is no, no, no from the other side. I think it is about time, you know, there are lots of issues we can fight on, but education should be bipartisan. And you know that we have worked together to make this a bipartisan approach, and I feel sad that you have decided to make this partisan, but we are not going to let that stop us. We are going to move forward. We are going to get the bill passed, because the important thing is to reach out and help the students in our country be able to compete as we go forward in our progress. It is not going to have a lot of effect on me, but it is going to affect my children, my 28 grandchildren that are going to be able to, hopefully, get an education and compete on a worldwide basis.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the rule and to H.R. 609 in its current form. Prior to coming to Congress, for 29 years, I was a college administrator, and I spent 16 of those years as the chief administrator of the college I served. And my views on this bill and on this rule are informed by what I learned over the course of that time in dealing with students and faculty and parents and staff and all constituencies of the higher education community.

Over a hundred amendments have been offered on this bill, and this underscores the importance of this bill and of this issue to this Congress and to our future. And I understand that we are going to have a second rule, but I am troubled that the Rules Committee thus far seems to have excluded a great many amendments that would have taken a bill that many of us take issue with and made it better. We are talking about getting it through this week. What's the rush? Why do we have to take the most important issue to our future and rush through a consideration of a bill that is going to have far reaching consequences for the next several years? I mean, is this not what the American people sent us here to do, to debate the issues of importance to our future?

Some specific issues: There is an amendment with respect to whether or not the Federal Government should have a role in evaluating transfer credit and forming institutional policies on transfer credit. Is that not an issue that this body should debate? Should this body not debate whether or not we ought to extend the tuition tax credit that expired on December 31, a tax credit, by the way, that primarily benefits the middle class? Should we not be debating a reasonable change to the needs analysis system, the funda-

mental system that determines a family's ability to pay, which determines their eligibility for aid, which, in turn, determines whether or not they will be able to attend college? These are just some of the issues that at least thus far the rule excludes from consideration. And in so doing, I would say that the American people and certainly the students of this country are not being well served.

As Mr. MCKEON, our chairman, just said, education is the last issue we should be politicizing, but it appears that that is precisely what we are doing. Simply put, H.R. 609 fails to achieve its goal. We said the goal would be to make college more affordable and to expand access for Americans who wish to pursue the dream of a college education. H.R. 609, in its present form, falls woefully short of that goal. I say let us vote down this rule. Let us send the bill back to the Education Committee and let us try again.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, we should all be proud that America stands for opportunity, regardless of one's background. Our colleges and universities provide millions of students with the chance to realize their dreams and blaze their own paths. This could not happen without the Higher Education Act. But today we see the support coming under attack. This bill keeps the Federal Pell Grant stuck in the 1970s.

□ 1130

It increases interest rates on loans and forces students to absorb new fees. We should be expanding our students' horizon, not restricting it. And unless the second rule is open or allows every amendment submitted to Rules to be considered on the floor, it is shutting down this process.

Again, I want to point out that the last two times this House reauthorized the Higher Education Act, in 1992 and 1998, it did so under an amendment process that allowed any amendment that complied with House rules to be offered on the floor. We should do the same this time.

I urge all Members to reject this rule and the underlying legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA). The gentleman from Utah is recognized to close.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, in our discussion of the rule today, we have heard many things. We have heard discussions of budget issues, which will be addressed when we do the appropriations bill later on. We have heard discussion of rules that were not made into this particular rules order even though we clearly said there will be another rule coming up later to address those other issues, others of those 117 amendments that were made,

many of which were made by members of the committee who had full opportunity to debate and discuss, as they have talked about the 79 amendments in the committee, in a committee process that since the pre-War of 1812 days, when Henry Clay established the committee process to make a full and open hearing of these issues in committee before it came to the floor.

Nonetheless, there will still be two rules. This rule takes 15 of those amendments, opening up the opportunity for those later on to come.

We have also heard rhetoric about a bill that was passed last year. I find it important to remember that even when the Constitution was being debated, the anti-Federalists, who opposed the Constitution, made their case and lost, and then moved on and worked together with the Federalists, who passed the Constitution, to work together for a better country. That is the opportunity we have, to try to emulate that right now. It is time now to work together on this bill, on what this bill does.

You have already heard from the subcommittee chairman that it does no harm to those already in the system. You have heard from the chairman of the full committee how its goal is to increase the number of kids who can have access to these opportunities to enhance and reach their dream of a college education. That is the purpose. That is the goal. That is where we should maintain our focus. This rule provides for the first step in reaching that goal, and we will have another opportunity with a second rule later.

It is a good and fair rule, and I urge adoption of it because it deals with a bill that moves us forward, a bill where we should unite to move forward because it helps kids in America.

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

The previous question was ordered.

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

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

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 225, nays 198, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 70]

YEAS—225

Aderholt	Barton (TX)	Boehlert
Akin	Bass	Boehner
Alexander	Beauprez	Bonilla
Bachus	Biggart	Bonner
Baker	Bilirakis	Bono
Barrett (SC)	Bishop (UT)	Boozman
Bartlett (MD)	Blackburn	Boustany

Bradley (NH)	Hefley
Brady (TX)	Hensarling
Brown (SC)	Herger
Brown-Waite,	Hobson
Ginny	Hoekstra
Burgess	Hostettler
Burton (IN)	Hulshof
Buyer	Hunter
Calvert	Hyde
Camp (MI)	Inglis (SC)
Campbell (CA)	Issa
Cannon	Jenkins
Cantor	Jindal
Capito	Johnson (CT)
Carter	Johnson (IL)
Castle	Johnson, Sam
Chabot	Jones (NC)
Chocola	Keller
Coble	Kelly
Cole (OK)	Kennedy (MN)
Conaway	King (IA)
Crenshaw	King (NY)
Cubin	Kingston
Culberson	Kirk
Davis, Jo Ann	Kline
Davis, Tom	Knollenberg
Deal (GA)	Kolbe
DeLay	Kuhl (NY)
Dent	LaHood
Diaz-Balart, L.	LaTham
Diaz-Balart, M.	LaTourette
Doolittle	Leach
Drake	Lewis (CA)
Dreier	Lewis (KY)
Duncan	Linder
Ehlers	LoBiondo
Emerson	Lucas
English (PA)	Lungren, Daniel
Everett	E.
Feeney	Mack
Ferguson	Manzullo
Fitzpatrick (PA)	Marchant
Flake	McCauley (TX)
Foley	McCotter
Forbes	McCrery
Fortenberry	McHenry
Fossella	McHugh
Fox	McKeon
Franks (AZ)	McMorris
Frelinghuysen	Mica
Gallegly	Miller (FL)
Garrett (NJ)	Miller (MI)
Gerlach	Miller, Gary
Gibbons	Moran (KS)
Gilchrest	Murphy
Gillmor	Musgrave
Gingrey	Myrick
Gohmert	Neugebauer
Goode	Ney
Goodlatte	Northup
Granger	Norwood
Graves	Nunes
Green (WI)	Nussle
Gutknecht	Osborne
Harris	Otter
Hart	Oxley
Hastings (WA)	Paul
Hayes	Pearce
Hayworth	Pence

NAYS—198

Abercrombie	Carnahan	Emanuel
Ackerman	Carson	Engel
Allen	Case	Eshoo
Andrews	Chandler	Etheridge
Baca	Clay	Farr
Baird	Cleaver	Fattah
Baldwin	Clyburn	Filmer
Barrow	Conyers	Ford
Bean	Cooper	Frank (MA)
Becerra	Costa	Gonzalez
Berkley	Costello	Gordon
Berman	Cramer	Green, Al
Berry	Crowley	Green, Gene
Bishop (GA)	Cuellar	Grijalva
Bishop (NY)	Cummings	Gutierrez
Blumenauer	Davis (AL)	Hall
Boren	Davis (CA)	Harman
Boswell	Davis (IL)	Hastings (FL)
Boucher	Davis (TN)	Herseth
Boyd	DeFazio	Higgins
Brady (PA)	DeGette	Hinchey
Brown (OH)	Delahunt	Hinojosa
Brown, Corrine	DeLauro	Holden
Butterfield	Dicks	Holt
Capps	Dingell	Honda
Capuano	Doggett	Hooley
Cardin	Doyle	Hoyer
Cardoza	Edwards	Inslee

Peterson (PA)	Israel
Petri	Jackson (IL)
Pickering	Jackson-Lee
Pitts	(TX)
Platts	Jefferson
Poe	Johnson, E. B.
Pombo	Jones (OH)
Porter	Kanjorski
Price (GA)	Kaptur
Pryce (OH)	Kennedy (RI)
Putnam	Kildee
Radanovich	Kilpatrick (MI)
Ramstad	Kind
Regula	Kucinich
Rehberg	Langevin
Reichert	Lantos
Renzi	Larsen (WA)
Reynolds	Larson (CT)
Rogers (AL)	Lee
Rogers (KY)	Levin
Rogers (MI)	Lewis (GA)
Rohrabacher	Lipinski
Ros-Lehtinen	Lofgren, Zoe
Royce	Lowey
Ryan (WI)	Lynch
Ryun (KS)	Maloney
Saxton	Markey
Schmidt	Marshall
Schwarz (MI)	Matheson
Sensenbrenner	Matsui
Sessions	McCarthy
Shadeegg	McDermott
Shaw	McGovern
Shays	McIntyre
Sherwood	McKinney
Shimkus	McNulty
Shuster	Meehan
Simmons	Meek (FL)
Simpson	Meeks (NY)
Smith (NJ)	Melancon
Smith (TX)	

NOT VOTING—9

Blunt	Evans	Ruppersberger
Davis (FL)	Istook	Rush
Davis (KY)	McCollum (MN)	Sweeney

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised that 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1159

Messrs. CLEAVER, STARK, RANGEL and GEORGE MILLER of California changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. EHLERS changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 29, 2006.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 29, 2006, at 9:10 am: That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 4911.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.