

Why also is it that hundreds of drug smugglers flee to Mexico, but we never try to track them down until they will aid in prosecuting border agents? Those who do a difficult job of protecting our borders need all the help they can get."

Mr. Speaker, America needs to vigorously prosecute criminals who assault our border agents. After all, they are the first line of defense from the illegal invasion into our homeland.

And that's just the way it is.

WE NEED A COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM PACKAGE

(Ms. GIFFORDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GIFFORDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to make clear once again the immediate need for a comprehensive immigration reform package.

The L.A. Times yesterday reported that seven of the largest tunnels discovered under the U.S.-Mexico border in recent years have still yet to be filled in. This troubles me for many reasons, not the least of which because smugglers have tried to use these passages before.

We need to work in a bipartisan fashion to end illegal immigration. And we have to focus our attention on those who wish to do America harm, whether they are drug smugglers, human smugglers or terrorists.

President Bush made it very clear last week in the State of the Union address that we need to have a serious civil and conclusive debate on illegal immigration. I agree, and I look forward to doing just that, working with the administration and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do just that.

My district in southern Arizona continues to bear the brunt of the crisis, whether it is in our schools, our law enforcement, our first responders or in our hospitals. It is time to do what is necessary to secure the border now.

□ 1015

SOCIAL SECURITY TOTALIZATION AGREEMENT WITH MEXICO

(Mr. GOODE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOODE. Mr. Speaker, on June 29, 2004, the United States Social Security Commissioner and the Director General of the Mexican Social Security Institute entered into a Social Security totalization agreement between Mexico and the United States.

The U.S. has totalization agreements with 20 other countries. However, all of these, except Canada, are with countries a substantial distance away. As a result, they involve relatively few workers and have little or no impact on illegal immigration. Unfortunately, the Mexican totalization agreement will be a huge incentive for increased illegal immigration.

Under this agreement, if there is amnesty and a glide path to citizenship, illegal aliens will be able to qualify their work in the United States for Social Security funds. This would result in a huge increase in Social Security costs for the United States at a time when we are wrestling with reforming that system.

We need to stop the totalization agreement and preserve Social Security.

WISHING HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO MARION STOUT ON HER 111TH BIRTHDAY

(Mr. DUNCAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to wish a happy birthday today to my constituent, Marion Stout. She is 111 today and is now the oldest person in Tennessee.

She never misses a church service at Second Presbyterian Church in Knoxville. She walks two or three times a week with her caregiver, who says she walks until she gets tired, but she never gets tired. For her walks, she always wears a pretty dress, heels and rouge to highlight her blue eyes.

No matter what small thing someone does for her, she always says thank you. She says, I eat right, take care of myself and stay positive.

She bought some GE stock when she was 102 because she wanted a good, long-term investment.

I know the entire House wants to join me in wishing Marion Stout a happy 111th birthday today.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 20, FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, FISCAL YEAR 2007

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 116 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 116

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 20) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes. All points of order against the joint resolution and against its consideration are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gen-

tleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS), 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.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 116 provides for consideration of H.J. Res. 20, the continuing resolution for fiscal year 2007. It may seem strange that we are doing that at this late date.

The rule provides 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member on the Committee on Appropriations. The rule also provides one motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, every Congress has a constitutional responsibility to be good stewards of the money given to it by the American people, but the last Congress failed to live up to this duty. Of the 11 appropriations bills it was supposed to pass in 2006, only two were completed. The others were abandoned, left for the incoming Democratic Congress to deal with.

My fellow Democrats and I could have approached this responsibility in the way it was approached last year, but we promised to run the House differently, to run it responsibly, and that is exactly what we intend to do.

We had a mess to clean up, Mr. Speaker. The budget failures of the past Republican Congress have vastly increased our national debt, but they did more than that. They left agencies, States and localities in limbo for months concerning their future funding. What is more, we have seen an explosion in earmarks over the last 12 years in Washington, earmarks that had greased the wheels of an out-of-control congressional machinery.

The number of earmarks approved by the House had, according to estimates by even the most conservative of groups, doubled and tripled in recent Congresses, and for every shameful, unjustifiable bridge to nowhere that was exposed and shouted down by the public, many more questionable earmarks slipped through undetected, a few lines here or there in a large bill, mispending the people's money and taking advantage of their trust.

The Democrats have pledged to fundamentally reform the way earmarks are passed into law by this body, to bring transparency to a process that until recently had been deliberately shrouded in darkness.

The Rules reform package that we enacted on the first day of this Congress will shed new and much-needed light on the earmarking process. It will require the full disclosure of all earmarks proposed by Members of the House. If a project is worth funding, then the Representative requesting it should have no qualms with standing up publicly on its behalf.

But the earmarks in the budget bills left undone by Republicans last Congress did not have any such standards applied to them, and so Democrats have decided to rid this CR of all earmarks. It was a difficult decision and one which we all had to justify to our constituents back home. But in the end, it was a necessary step to bring forth a new day in the people's House.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is not perfect, and cleaning up the mess we inherited required difficult choices between bad alternatives.

But I am very pleased that despite it all the legislation does contain increases in funding for critical programs affecting the lives of millions of people at home and around the world.

Spending on veterans health care is increased by \$3.6 billion above the 2006 spending level. Spending on Pell Grants for the first time in 5 years is increased by \$615.4 million. The NIH is going to receive an additional \$619.6 million.

Other increases are going to support public housing, crime and law enforcement, and domestic transportation needs.

The bill even has a global focus, granting an additional \$1.3 million to expand the efforts to combat HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis internationally.

Mr. Speaker, the minority, I predict, will claim that the closed rule under which we are debating this bill is a violation of the spirit of the House and a rejection of the promises Democrats made last year to open up the legislative process.

Let me be very clear, extremely clear about the past record of the House. Since 1997, the House has voted on 75 continuing resolutions, and all of them, 100 percent, were considered under a closed rule process with no amendments allowed. What is more, a third of those continuing resolutions contained substantive policy changes.

In addition to that extensive precedent, the House has already fully debated and considered eight of the appropriations measures contained here. To do so again would take us all year, and we do not have that luxury, not with the many challenges that confront our Nation at this moment in history.

Under the circumstances left for us by the former majority, we have done the best we could. We have produced a bill that will keep the government functioning and a bill that, despite its flaws, is a breath of fresh air compared with how appropriations legislation used to be handled in this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are ready for a new direction. They have proved that in this country, and that is why they put a new kind of Congress in power. This Congress is going to be defined not just by the way it does business, but by the kind of business it conducts.

This Congress is not going to pass the buck, leaving unfinished business for others to handle and leaving problems

for others to fix. Democrats are making the tough choices the American people expect us to make and that they elected us to make.

At the end of the day, that is what real leadership is all about.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman and the chairwoman of the Rules Committee for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself as much time as may I consume.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Rules Committee held a 3-hour hearing and took testimony from the appropriations chairman Mr. OBEY and Members that brought forth amendments to the committee in hopes of having them debated and considered on the floor here today.

Many good ideas were presented to the committee. These ideas ranged from considering a true, clean continuing resolution to restoring the lapse Federal Government safety net for 4,400 schools and 780 counties in rural America, from helping farmers with natural disaster relief, to increasing funding for local housing authorities, to taking unspent money from a rain forest education project in Iowa and, instead, spending those moneys to help millions, to help our veterans.

But unfortunately, after listening to the thoughtful testimony from Members on their ideas for improving the bill, the Rules Committee rejected every single one of them and approved this closed rule by an 8-4 vote.

So this House will spend just 1 hour, Mr. Speaker, considering this bill with no amendments even allowed to be debated and no substitute bill allowed to be offered by the minority.

So why the rush and the closed process? We are not asking for much. Give us a few minutes to sort out confusing parts of this resolution that have not passed the House previously, but have magically appeared in this resolution, like a rewriting of the formula for the distribution of section 8 housing funds. This new formula will affect hundreds of communities all across the Nation.

In my district in Washington State, multiple communities are slated to have their grants cut dramatically. In one city, city of Kennewick, the housing authority alone there will have their grant cut by \$1 million. That is roughly one-third of their total budget. This rewritten formula was not approved by the House in previous spending bills for this year and clearly needs more input and discussion before becoming law. Unfortunately, we are denied the opportunity to discuss that.

One major issue that is neglected on this bill is a continuing safety net for our schools and counties in rural areas that have large amounts of Federal land and, therefore, have a very limited tax base. Recognizing the importance of this safety net, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon came to the Rules Committee and offered a bipartisan amendment with

Mr. DEFazio of Oregon that would have provided a 1-year extension of funding so that these schools could keep their libraries open, keep the teachers at least through the end of the school year, and help counties with necessary road repairs. Let me be clear. Last year, over 4,400 schools received \$400 million, and with this bill, they will receive exactly zero.

After convincing testimony by Mr. WALDEN, three Democrat members of the Rules Committee agreed to join me and Chairwoman SLAUGHTER as cosponsors of H.R. 17 which would fix the problem for an additional 7 years. Less than an hour later, however, the Rules Committee voted against even considering a bipartisan amendment that would provide 1 hour of relief for this problem, saying that it is not the right vehicle.

Mr. Speaker, please try to explain to school children when their libraries close because of insufficient funding that the Congress wanted to act but chose not to because they did not feel this was the right vehicle.

Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, hundreds of unauthorized programs continue to be funded in this underlying resolution. We do not have a complete list of the unauthorized programs because the underlying measure is not a general appropriations bill and did not go through regular order. Therefore, there is no report which is required to list all unauthorized programs that are funded.

Mr. Speaker, I heard my colleagues on the other side of the aisle speak at length about the open process they would have when they were in charge. I want to believe them, I truly do. I have had discussions with my colleagues up in the Rules Committee every time we have met this year, but unfortunately, the actions simply do not match the promises that were made.

□ 1030

At the beginning of the 110th Congress, I heard my colleagues on the majority side say that after we wrap up our first 100 hours agenda, we will have an open process. It has now been nearly 4 weeks. The 100 hours are long past, and yet the House is yet to consider a bill under an open rule. Most have been closed out without any amendments.

I have to ask when, when will this House have the opportunity to debate and consider the bills? When will the minority be permitted to truly participate in this process? Because I can think of no better time than right now when we are considering the funding for our Nation's priorities and funding for almost the entire Federal Government.

Let us have a real debate on the \$463 billion in this omnibus. I urge my colleagues to vote against this rule.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Just as a response to my colleague from Washington to remind him that, just a month ago, the minority was the majority. If he thinks the things he points out today were serious problems, he should have fixed them then.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. I thank the gentlewoman for the time.

Mr. Speaker, let me simply make a few observations about the gentleman's comments. With respect to the forest funded school program that he is talking about, it needs to be understood that is not within the jurisdiction of our committee. The problem with that program is that the authorizing committee has allowed that program to expire, and it is a mandatory program. Any time the Appropriations Committee tries to involve itself in mandatory programs we get skinned by people on both sides of the aisle, and we are told to mind our own business. We have.

I am very sympathetic about the gentleman's problem, but this is not an appropriated program. The Appropriations Committee deals with discretionary spending, not mandatory spending.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. Surely.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I appreciate the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the conversation we had earlier that this is not in your jurisdiction, but we were given waivers in this bill for legislation that is also not under your jurisdiction, and the rewrite, if I am not mistaken, of the formula that I mentioned on formula 8.

Mr. OBEY. But the fact is we have not reauthorized expired programs. That is the difference. We do not have the authority to reauthorize a mandatory program. If we did, we would have to find another \$320 million, and I would like to know where that offset is going to come from.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. The gentleman is right to want this program to continue, but he is wrong if he thinks that the Appropriations Committee is the proper venue for it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. I would prefer not to. I only have 5 minutes. The gentleman as the bill manager has more time than I do.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin has the time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield for 30 seconds.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I appreciate the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the amendment that was offered by our colleague from Oregon, while, yes, it refers to as a mandatory program was simply a 1-year program so that this problem could be fixed.

Mr. OBEY. I understand that. We had nine other requests to do the same thing. If we had done so, Members on your side of the aisle would have come and attacked us and scalped us for doing things that we had no business doing. So he can't have it both ways, which is what many Members in the minority are trying to do today.

I would be happy to join with the gentleman in urging the authorizing committee to fix the problem, but it is not within our purview to do.

With that, I take back the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to prolong the comments on the rule. Let me simply say that the majority had 8 months to deal with the most basic responsibility of a legislative body, which is to pass the Federal budget. They were in the majority. They now are not. Now they are in the minority.

We are trying to clean up their spilt milk, and they can squawk all they want about how we did it. The fact is, there are no new issues here. Virtually every single issue that will be debated today was already debated when we passed the appropriation bills. These are the bills that the House passed last summer in the previous session of the Congress. We had hundreds of amendments to these bills.

Now because the Republicans in the House couldn't convince the Republicans in the Senate to vote for these bills, we have before us what is, in essence, a pre-conferenced conference report, and we have boiled down this almost 1,000 pages. This is what it would look like if we had an omnibus appropriation bill. We would have had 1,000 pages of legislative material. We have boiled it down to about 150 pages.

We have basically decided to stick with the fiscal year 2006 basic funding level for most programs. We try to then adjust programs for agencies so that they don't have to lay off workers, so that they don't have to have furloughs, such as the Social Security Department and the FBI, who both told us that they desperately needed these adjustments or they would have to shut down their operations or lay off people.

We then decided that there are some priorities on both sides of the aisle, and we used almost \$10 billion, which we had cut from other portions of the bill, to finance those items.

You may not like the choices we have made, but, in contrast to the last Congress which ducked its responsibility to make these choices, at least we have made the choices. At least we have made them, and we are going to vote on this today. We are going to send it to the Senate so that when the President submits his new budget on February 5, he has a clean slate and so do we, and that is the way it ought to be.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished ranking member of the Rules Committee, Mr. DREIER from California.

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this rule. We keep hearing that every time this has come before us it has been considered under a closed rule. A closed rule is the norm for this. The fact of the matter is, in 1987 is the last time that we considered a year-long CR that would have allowed for consideration of the entire budget.

Guess what? It was under a Democratic Congress, and at that time they made eight amendments in order. Since that time, we considered short-term continuing resolutions, and they have been done under unanimous consent, they have been done under suspension of the rules. But it is a complete mischaracterization to say every time we consider something like this it has been done under a closed rule.

Mr. Speaker, at some point, at some point, and I don't know when that will be, the Democratic leadership is going to run out of excuses as to why they deny both Democrats and Republicans, Democrats and Republicans, the opportunity to participate in the process.

First, it was, we promised to get the Six for '06 done in 100 hours. We considered a lot of this stuff in the last Congress. Then it was, well, this is the same rule that was considered back in the 103rd Congress. Now it is, well, this is your mess, Republicans, and we have to clean it up.

The fact of the matter is, the argument that our friends on the other side of the aisle have continued to make over and over and over again is shutting out more than half of the American people. As I say, it is shutting out the opportunity for both Democrats and Republicans to participate in the process.

We offered 21 amendments, very thoughtful amendments, that would have taken \$44.5 million, \$44.5 million, that is utilized right now for rain forest education in Iowa and transfer that spending to help provide desperately needed assistance to the war wounded. These are the kinds of priorities that we have set forward, Mr. Speaker. Tragically, this process has denied us to help the war wounded over those who want to focus attention on rain forest education in Iowa.

Oppose this rule and oppose this measure.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to yield 1 minute to Mr. OBEY from Wisconsin for whatever he wants to do with it.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, we have just heard unmitigated nonsense from the gentleman. The gentleman is somehow claiming that we are funding that silly rain forest that your party agreed to 2 years ago in Iowa. The fact is that Senator BYRD and I made clear we would provide no earmarks in the 2006 bill.

Mr. DREIER. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. I am not going to yield, so let me finish my thought. The gentleman does it all the time, and it is highly rude.

Mr. DREIER. I always yield.

Mr. OBEY. I would simply point out that we had no requirement to retroactively go back 2 years earlier and repeal silly things that your side of the aisle did 2 years ago. There is not a dollar in this bill for that rain forest. You know it as well as I do. Quit trying to pretend otherwise.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4½ minutes to the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Washington State for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, I am here today to talk about the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act, H.R. 17, of which the chairman of the Rules Committee is a cosponsor.

I went before the Rules Committee yesterday with an amendment cosponsored by my colleague from Oregon (Mr. DEFazio) to reauthorize, or to appropriate, I should say, not reauthorize, for 1 year, just 1 year, funds for our schools and roads in our communities, \$400 million.

To meet the PAYGO test, we provided a mechanism. It is not the most elegant mechanism out there, but it was an across-the-board reduction in all spending by .00086 percent, or 1 penny out of \$11.59 spent in this bill.

Today, across America, in more than 4,400 school districts in 600 counties, layoff notices are going out for teachers, for sheriffs' deputies, for search-and-rescue patrols, for essential services in our counties. Libraries in Jackson County, Oregon, will close in April, all 15 of them, because the last Congress and now this Congress has failed to take action, failed.

The distinguished gentleman who chairs the Appropriations Committee says, this is mandatory spending; we can't touch it in our bill. You can't authorize in this bill, oh, unless you got a waiver from the Rules Committee, because you cannot stand here and tell me there aren't programs being funded in this bill that have fully been authorized. I don't believe it is the case. This is one such program, and you made the choice not to do it here.

Now, many of you have indicated that you will work with us to fund this somewhere else, and I am deeply appreciative of that. The chairwoman of the Rules Committee, a cosponsor of this reauthorization legislation, made that commitment yesterday, I believe, to work with us on some other vehicle.

But I just have to tell you how dramatic this is in my district and in districts across this country where school board administrators are having to tell their teachers, next year I can't guarantee you will have a contract, and I have to be able to do that by March 1. They are putting out the layoff notices. They are looking at shutting down vital services. All because this

Federal Government made a decision at some point to stop harvesting timber on Federal forest land in a significant measure, an 80 to 85 percent reduction, that this Congress, through its actions in the past and lawsuits and everything else, brought to a dramatic halt, active management of our Federal force.

Last year in America, 9 million acres burned, and this Congress had to appropriate \$1.5 billion to put out forest fires and grassland fires, the most in the history of our country, following another year that was the most.

We will not change the policy so we get commonsense management of our forests. Now, for the first time in nearly 100 years you break the commitment that the Federal Government has had since Teddy Roosevelt was President and created the great forest reserves, to be a good neighbor to the counties where up to 70 or 80 percent of the Federal lands in their counties are owned and managed or mismanaged, in some of our opinions, by the Federal Government.

School kids in my district out in Grant County boarding this bus are going to be traveling on roads where the road department is basically being eliminated.

I want to share with you a letter from a fifth grader in Ashland, Oregon. A fifth grader in Ashland, Oregon, gets it and understands that this Congress ought to be able to understand it and get it. She wrote to me after going to a Martin Luther King event and decided she ought to get involved in public service. Her mother is a school teacher; her father is a professor.

"I live in Ashland and go to Bellview School. I am in fifth grade. I use our library a lot. We always borrow books on tape for car trips. My New Year's resolution is to read all the 'Hank the Cowdog' books, and the library has them all. I need the library to stay open so I can finish my resolution. I also use a lot of books there for school reports.

"Please help to keep our library system open!

"Sincerely, Alice."

I appreciate your willingness to work with us in the future. I wish we could have had the amendment made in order in this resolution so that Alice could get her school books and the layoff notices wouldn't go out.

The Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (H.R. 17 a.k.a. County Payments), in both this Congress and the last, has been a strongly bipartisan issue.

The DeFazio-Walden legislation to reauthorize and fund the County Payments program for seven years enjoys the support of 98 Members of their House.

I would like to thank the members of the Rules Committee who heard me out yesterday on a DeFazio-Walden amendment which would have restored funding for this vital program. I would like to thank Congressmen MCGOVERN, ALCEE HASTINGS (FL) and CARDOZA, who following my remarks in Committee, joined Chairwoman SLAUGHTER and

Congressman DOC HASTINGS (WA) as cosponsors of H.R. 17.

As I have said in eight of 18 one-minute Floor speeches, the failure of Congress to reauthorize the County Payments program is a breach of faith to more than 600 forested counties and 4,400 school districts across America.

The DeFazio-Walden amendment offered in the Rules Committee yesterday would have provided the vital \$400 million to fund this program for one year as we work to fully reauthorize and fund the program. The amendment would have met the PAYGO rule by providing a .00086 percent across-the-board reduction in the [\$463 billion] CR we are considering today. This fraction of a percent reduction amounts to one penny out of every \$11.59 which will be appropriated in this CR.

One penny is all that rural counties and school districts across this country need.

Without this penny, what will happen to rural America's forested counties and school districts? Severe cuts in funding for jail beds, sheriff's patrols, and criminal prosecutions, and the pursuit of meth cooks. Rural school districts will forego overdue repairs, not buy textbooks, or face significant challenges bus-sing kids to school.

Libraries will close in places like Jackson County, Oregon. In fact, during the Rules Committee discussion yesterday, Chairwoman SLAUGHTER commented that "even during the Depression we didn't close libraries." I would like to draw your attention to a letter I received from Alice, a fifth-grader from Ashland, Oregon who utilizes one of the 15 Jackson County libraries scheduled to close in April if this vital funding is not restored.

There are further impacts. Surely you remember the searches for the Kim Family in southern Oregon and the mountain climbers on Mt. Hood? Both Jackson and Hood River Counties used equipment and personnel paid for in part by the County Payments program in those searches. The Klamath County, Oregon sheriff's force of 35 officers will be cut by one-third. They patrol an area 100 times the size of the District of Columbia.

These vital county services and rural school programs were once funded by timber receipts. The virtual elimination of timber harvest in our Federal forests prompted Congress to provide payments to develop forest health improvement projects on public lands and simultaneously stimulate job development and community economic stability.

Consider that Oregon's Second District, which I represent, is 60 percent public land; 78 percent of Harney County is public land; 79 percent of Deschutes County is public land; 72 percent of Hood River County is public land.

While these forest and range lands are America's treasures, these vast tracts of land do not provide a tax base for communities, greatly reducing the amount of revenue that can be generated for services like schools, libraries, and law enforcement.

I appreciate the kind words from the Rules Committee members and their commitment to work with Congressman DEFazio and myself to find the appropriate legislative vehicle to deal with this rural Federal funding crisis.

We must not wait any longer—pink slips are being sent to county employees, rural school programs are being cut, and Alice, the fifth-grader from Ashland, Oregon is losing her library—time is running out.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

□ 1045

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman's courtesy in permitting me to speak on this.

I understand my colleague from Oregon being frustrated. This is an issue we have discussed over the last year, and I imagine his frustration has doubled because the committee that he was a member of in the last Congress, the bill did not find its way into law because of what happened in the prior Congress. I understand his going with my colleague, Mr. DEFAZIO, to the Rules Committee and flagging the issue because while it is not quite as critical in my direct district, it affects them and it affects my State. And not just Oregon, but there are people in rural America across the United States for whom this is serious.

I am sorry that the last Congress failed in its responsibility. I worked with him then. I will work with him now.

I respectfully disagree slightly in terms of the tactic, in terms of venting frustration at the Rules Committee or the Appropriations Committee. I take the Chair of the Appropriations Committee at his word that he is concerned. He will work with us. The Chair of the Rules Committee, Ms. SLAUGHTER, is a cosponsor with us. And I look forward, as we move forward with this year's budget, to doing the best we can.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I would be happy to yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. I think it is the Ways and Means Committee. Is it Agriculture or Ways and Means?

Mr. BLUMENAUER. It is Natural Resources, isn't it?

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I think I can clarify it, although I am on the minority side.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I yield to the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, the bill, I think, has been referred to both the Natural Resources Committee and the Agriculture Committee. In the last Congress, my subcommittee and the full Resources Committee passed the bill out to the Agriculture Committee, where no further action was taken, nor was there any action taken by the United States Senate, which was no great surprise.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you.

Mr. DICKS. And if the gentleman will continue to yield, then, of course, under PAYGO, we have to find an offset; isn't that correct?

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Right.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to tell the gentleman I want to work with him as well because this is a

major concern in our whole area out there in the Northwest, and I appreciate his leadership on this issue.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I want to divide the issues here. I appreciate my friend and colleague clarifying that it was both committees, neither of which I am a member of, but I am working with him, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. DICKS and others in the Northwest to try to resolve this. We are frustrated that the process broke down, but I want us to get started on the right foot.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield again just briefly.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Yes.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, when we first had the forest plan, the major reduction in timber harvesting, we worked on a bipartisan basis to get an offset. I think it was like \$250 million, something like that, and a phase out over a number of years. But I realize some of the schools, especially in Oregon, get a very substantial amount of money for this program, and I hope we can find an offset.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I appreciate Mr. DICKS' willingness to come forward, his interaction with my colleague even now, Mr. WALDEN.

This is important business. It failed last Congress. It is not going to be achieved this Congress unless we are able to do it in a bipartisan fashion, unless we are able to look seriously at dealing with the funding. Wedging it in here, with all due respect, is ill-advised. Having an across-the-board cut for everybody on something where I know Mr. OBEY has been working very hard to clear the decks so we can get busy on this year's budget and that we can start looking at the overall fiscal situation.

I will continue my efforts to work with the gentleman, but I don't think we ought to confuse it today with the matter before us. I think it is appropriate to use as a vehicle to raise the issue. I think it was a point well made before the Rules Committee. I appreciate his coming to the floor here today to talk about unmet needs. There may be others that could talk about unmet needs. The issue before us is moving forward.

For me, I hope this is the last time this CR action happens. I appreciate the Appropriations Committee being willing to make some very tough decisions. This is not something that would have been ideal. I am sure Mr. DICKS, as a senior member of that committee, there are things that he would have done differently. I am sure Mr. OBEY didn't want to be in this situation. But the fact is we are picking up from the abject failure of the Republican leadership last Congress, a breakdown in the process, a failure to pass the legislation, and now we must move forward.

I support this rule. I don't think we have to go back 20 years to find one exception. The fact is we have a plan to move forward. I appreciate the work

that has been done. We don't have to bring up extraneous issues. I, too, like Mr. OBEY, choked hearing about the reference to the rain forest, which wasn't something that is dealt with in this bill. You could go back over time and start undoing the work that Mr. DREIER or others disagree with when they were in the majority. I hope they come to the Appropriations Committee with proposals to rescind things that they did, but do it in the course of regular order in terms of the authorizing committee or coming forward with their own amendments in the course of what is going to happen this year.

To somehow pick on this rule, pick on this CR, trying to deal with the mess that the Appropriations Committee inherited, I think is out of line, uncalled for, and, frankly, hypocritical.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), a member of the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear that my friend from Oregon supports regular order. That is not what we are seeing today.

But the pundits say there is no point in talking about the legislative process in this debate today. They say people don't care about the rights of the legislative minority. I am not so sure about that. When people outside the Beltway hear that the funding bill for the rest of the year was basically drawn up by two people—one Senate chairman and one House chairman, in a closed room with no input from anyone else—they might conclude that doesn't sound quite right. And then when they hear this bill cuts military construction by \$730 million below last year's level and falls over \$3 billion short of the redeployment needs of our servicemen and their families, then most people might feel a little more debate and a few more people in the room could have resulted in a solution that fully funded these essential programs. That is the way the legislative process works. Someone drafts up a proposal. Then it is debated and amended, and in the end, a consensus is possible.

But this is the first time in recent memory where the leadership simply puts two people in a room and lets them write an entirely new bill, moving the numbers around to suit their own preferences. And then the House is told "just take it or leave it." No amendments. No give and take. No one else allowed to submit a better idea. And only 30 minutes of debate for the minority side.

Maybe that is why this bill does not meet the critical needs of our soldiers, such as basic housing allowance and research for Gulf War veterans and amputees.

So, Mr. Speaker, process may be considered inside baseball and a nonissue to some. But to me, democracy calls for a fair process, even in a continuing resolution; and, more often than not, it results in a better bill for the average citizen.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), a member of the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. WALSH of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the work of Chairman OBEY and his staff in consulting with us on the Labor-HHS chapter of this bill. I know the gentleman from Wisconsin, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, has been put in a difficult position. A position we in the House lamented all last year when the other body neglected to schedule time for our bills.

But I would remind everyone that under Chairman LEWIS' leadership, we completed work on every bill but one by July 4 of last year.

This process insist my view is beyond the pale. First of all, this is a continuing resolution in name only. For all practical purposes, it is an omnibus bill. To my knowledge, not one Member of the House other than the bill's sponsor saw this product in its entirety until Monday night. Let us be clear. This is not an inconsequential bill. It provides roughly half the money needed to run the government for an entire, and we are going to whisk it off the House floor in a grand total of 2 hours. The Appropriations Committee has not met to discuss the contents of the bill, let alone to offer amendments that could improve it. And Members of the House have had only slightly more than one day to decode the unorthodox language contained in this 137-page document. Furthermore, the bill before us is not amendable by the body as a whole. I cannot recall the entire time I have been a Member of the House a single appropriations bill that has not been open to amendment at some level.

The American people who watch this debate will see us spend \$463.5 billion of their money with a grand total of 2 hours of discussion, 1 hour on the rule, 1 hour of general debate. If you do the math, that is \$3.8 billion per minute of public debate. Frankly, that is a travesty, and the American people deserve better.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Continuing Resolution for Fiscal 2007 and I join in complimenting our distinguished chairman, Mr. OBEY, for accomplishing in a few weeks, with the distinguished Senate Appropriations Chairman, ROBERT BYRD, what their predecessors were both unwilling and unable to do.

A mess was inherited from the prior Congress, and this bill cleans those up and corrects them in a very responsible fashion.

If any of our colleagues on the other side want to criticize this package, I ask why didn't they fix it when they had a chance? I also ask why did they

create this irresponsible problem by delaying passage of these necessary measures in the first place? It should have been done by the end of September of last year. Despite the constitutional expectations to pass all appropriation bills by September 30 in time for the new fiscal year, the last time all appropriation bills passed on time was 1994, when the Democrats were in charge, and thank goodness we are again.

The action today roughly provides cuts in over 60 programs and rescinds unobligated balances in order to transfer \$10 billion in savings that are used to address critical investments such as our veterans' health care and health accounts of the Department of Defense to care for our returning wounded veterans. It will keep our Social Security offices open rather than shutting them down. Community policing is increased by \$70 million. And it provides important help for students, Pell grants, about \$260 more per year for each of them. It covers additional children with disabilities. It provides \$103.7 million for Head Start. It provides funding to expand some of our community health centers to take care of people who don't have any health insurance. It keeps our Public Housing authorities utility costs at least paid for the moment. It provides \$125 million for 38,000 additional students below grade level. And we provide an additional \$197.1 million for the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund. Federal Highway funds are provided at levels guaranteed in SAFETEA and Amtrak funding is maintained at 2006 levels. We know that is still \$266 million below 2004 levels. We just don't have the funds to do everything we want to do. But at least we want to move forward.

Our Nation has many needs, Mr. Speaker, and we need to understand and meet those responsibilities for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. But surely we have responsibilities here at home, and we have a responsibility to meet the need for a defensible budget policy that imposes tough decisions in tough times.

I want to congratulate Mr. OBEY as our new chairman of the Appropriations Committee, somebody who is not only well suited to this position, but probably the finest chairman of Appropriations I have ever had the opportunity to serve with.

Thank you for doing what you had to do for the Nation. Congratulations.

Please, I ask all my colleagues to vote for this continuing resolution on behalf of all the citizens of our country.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to my colleague on the Rules Committee, Mr. SESSIONS of Texas.

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Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the gentleman from the State of Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this closed rule and to the un-

derlying 137-page, as they call it, omnibus appropriations measure that is being rushed to the floor of the House of Representatives today without committee oversight, regular order, or input from the vast majority of Members of this body.

Last night in the Rules Committee, I offered an amendment that would have eliminated \$44.5 million in unspent funds from an earmark that dates back to the 2004 omnibus appropriations measure that would have created an indoor rain forest in Coralville, Iowa. Because the project failed to meet its non-Federal matching funds matching requirement, this money remains unspent. It is sitting waiting for it to be spent.

Last night, I offered an amendment that could be used for better purposes. It could be used to make sure that we move the money to the veterans health care program, and that is exactly what my amendment said. Despite their claim of support for veterans health care and their stated opposition to earmarks, Democrats rejected my commonsense proposal on a party line vote of 9-4.

They also rejected along the same party line margin an amendment offered by my colleague from California (Mr. CAMPBELL) which would have replaced the Democrats' omnibus spending bill with a clean continuing resolution that would have saved taxpayers around \$7 billion.

Mr. Speaker, we are on the floor today because we believe that the process that should have included more time and more opportunity for feedback but at least the ability in the Rules Committee to do the right thing was rejected by the Democrats who stand up and say that they are for an open and fair process.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to vote against this bill.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my former colleague on the Rules Committee, Mr. GINGREY from Georgia.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose this rule and the underlying resolution. No amendments allowed, no committee hearings, no committee votes taken, all we have is simply a closed rule, a closed process, a bunch of broken promises.

So here we go again, Mr. Speaker. Once more, Members of the House find themselves with really no good choices, forced to accept the "our way or the highway" mentality of the new majority, despite their promises to do otherwise.

As if the majority's broken promises for civility and openness in the people's House wasn't disconcerting enough, this continuing resolution is one giant broken promise.

For instance, the Democrats promise no earmarks in this continuing resolution. They even include "window-dressing" language to that effect for the

purpose of their talking points and sound bites. Yet, on closer inspection, one realizes that, while this resolution does eliminate earmarks for organizations such as the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, various law enforcement programs, schools and hospitals, it somehow still provides funding for several notorious million-dollar earmarks such as the Bridge to Nowhere.

Mr. Speaker, the Democratic rationale for picking at which earmarks stay and which earmarks go strikes me as bizarre and hypocritical, to say the least.

Even more troubling, this continuing resolution shortchanges our military, their families and our communities transitioning under the BRAC process by almost \$3.1 billion, not to mention an additional billion dollar shortfall for military construction. Clearly, the majority has a "tough love" philosophy when it comes to our military, their families and the war on terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, we could have even fixed some of these problems right here, right now if Members had been allowed to offer amendments. But I guess that is not the way it works in this moveon.org Congress.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS).

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

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I want to also commend the chairman of the committee, Mr. OBEY, for the work that he has done on this bill. I had some reservations, I must say, when we started down this road. But I now realize that Chairman OBEY and our counterpart chairman in the Senate had a good plan to put this thing together.

I regret that last year we did not pass 9 of the 11 appropriations bills. Thank goodness, we passed Defense and Homeland Security. And I do think it is important to point out, and I am sure Mr. OBEY did this, that we passed most of the bills except for HHS in the House.

So I do not blame our colleagues here for what happened. It was the other body that refused to bring the bills up in a timely way.

Now, we have, you know, we had a difficult hand that we were dealt. There is some very good programs like rural water development and some very important school money that we could not include because they were earmarks.

But I do think it is important for everyone to recognize that, for Indian Health Services, we were able to increase that by \$125 million. If we had not done that, hundreds of thousands of members of the tribes would not have been able to get health care.

We were able to take care of the LANDSAT for the U.S. Geological Survey, plus \$16 million; U.S. Forest fire-fighting costs, plus \$70; EPA Homeland Security hazard, plus \$9.5; and operational shortfalls.

One of the biggest problems we have with our land management agencies is that they do not have enough money in the President's budget to cover fixed costs, and 80 to 90 percent of their costs are employees. So when that happens they have been, over the last 7 years, forced to cut employment, not fill vacancies. This has affected the Park Service. This has also affected the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service. They are all hurting. They do not have enough resources. So we have some very major issues that we have to deal with.

Conservation has been hit by this administration. From 2001 to 2006, the Interior budget has been reduced by 1.2 percent in real terms. EPA has been cut by 6.6 percent. We put these two agencies together in this bill.

So this is a question of priority; and what I am hopeful of, with the new majority and with a new budget and with a new allocation, we will be able to stop the bleeding in these conservation agencies. No one has been a bigger supporter of these agencies than the chairman of the committee who has worked with me on a series of conservation initiatives over the years, but this is a serious problem that we have to face up to.

You know, we may have to work to get new legislation enacted in order to increase the amount of money. The land and water conservation money, the amount of money that the administration proposed, has never shown up in the budget. So it is time for us to find some new solutions.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SHADEGG).

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

I rise in opposition to this closed rule and to the bill that comes to the floor under that closed rule. I think it is important to understand that this 137 page bill comes to the floor as a critically important piece of legislation, a piece of legislation that will control the vast amount of spending of the Federal Government for the balance of the fiscal year.

And yet the process by which it is coming to the floor is no less than stunning. The leaders on the other side said, as soon as the 100 hours are over, we will accord you procedural fairness. I have here the Boston Globe and the Washington Post in which each of them said, "As soon as that is done, on January 18," the majority leader said, "Republicans will enjoy more rights and power than they allowed Democrats in the entire 12 years the Democrats were in the minority."

Yet this bill comes to us under a stunning procedure. Indeed, this bill, these 137 pages, at the Appropriations Committee level received no hearing, no hearing whatsoever. At the markup level, no markup occurred.

What does that mean? That means no Democrat was allowed an opportunity

at the committee level to offer an amendment, and no Republican was allowed an opportunity to offer an amendment to this bill.

Ladies and gentlemen, if you are represented by either a Member of the majority or a Member of the minority, you get no say in this bill.

So the bill then proceeded to the Rules Committee. Well, at the Rules Committee, the Democrats and Republicans in theory could offer amendments. Would you like to know how many amendments were made in order for the minority party? Answer: Zero. Not one. Not one.

How about the Democrats? Were they allowed to offer an amendment?

This is not a fair procedure, and this is not democracy.

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

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, my only response to some of the comments I have heard from the other side of the aisle is, you are really something else. You are really something else. You spent all of the last year trying to pass appropriation bills. You passed all but one through the House. You could not get your Republican friends in the Senate to support any of them. So when you relinquished your duties we had no domestic budget for the coming year.

I offered on the floor to make any substantive compromises necessary when you were still in control. I offered to make any procedural concessions necessary to enable you to pass the bills on your watch. You did not do it.

Your own chairman at the time admitted that the Republican floor leader in the Senate blocked the bills from passage. So you have forfeited any right to squawk about how we cleaned up your mess.

Now I want to comment on a few claims that have been made. You say there has been no participation by the minority side.

This bill was negotiated at the staff level for 3½ weeks, 7 days a week, around the clock. Your staff was invited to every meeting. Some of them they did not come because they did not like the choices that were being made. But someone had to make the decisions, because you did not.

So the staff negotiated virtually all of those compromises. When they could not reach agreement, then they brought the Members in. You had Senator DOMENICI on the Republican side and Mr. VISCLOSKEY going on and on about the Energy and Water bill, for instance. You had ROSA DELAUNO in the ag bill involved, you had Mr. DICKS in the Interior bill involved as the appropriate subcommittee chairs. If you did not bring your subcommittee ranking members into the mix, that is your fault, not mine.

All I know is, our people participated. If they did not on your side, it is either because they did not want to or because you did not invite them to. I do not know which is which. Do not blame us for your screw-ups.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POMEROY). All Members are reminded that they should address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER).

Mr. KELLER of Florida. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose the rule because it is a closed rule that does not provide a fair and open amendment process.

On the positive side, the underlying continuing resolution increases funding for Pell Grants and COPS while not exceeding the spending caps set by the President's budget. As the ranking member on the Higher Education Subcommittee, I am pleased that the Pell Grant maximum awards go up \$260 from \$4,050 to \$4,310.

I also believe in putting more cops on the street through increased funding to the COPS Program, especially since my home town of Orlando saw its murder rate more than double in the past year. I sent a letter to the appropriators signed by Anthony Weiner and 101 Members calling for an increase in COPS funding. I am pleased that this bill increases COPS funding by \$70 million, which is enough money to put 900 new cops on the street.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL).

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, you know, last year, I watched the worst budget failure since the 1995 government shutdown led by the Republican Congress. You only passed two appropriations bills, you got no budget resolution passed to get your work done, and then you are sitting here complaining after we are trying to clean up the mess you left behind.

We have a phrase for that in Chicago. It is called chutzpah. You cannot do that. You cannot sit here and come to the floor and complain about what has happened here. Because you handed off nothing but lemons and we are trying to make lemonade out of the lemons that you handed off here.

I compliment us for doing exactly what we said we were going to do. There are no earmarks, there is no pay rise, and there are no gimmicks. It is a new day in Washington from the failures of what happened in the past, and we are very clear that this will be a new day from the type of politics that ran here, and there will be none of that until we pass an increase in the minimum wage. We have done right by what we said.

I compliment, as the Republican speaker beforehand, my colleague, said, from Florida, this is a budget that veterans can be proud of, the education of our children, our health care needs and our law enforcement needs, that directly help people. While college costs have gone up close to 35 percent since 2003, we have held Pell Grants frozen. They are now going up \$260. 5.3

million more students will get the assistance they need.

Increases for veterans, \$3.6 billion to provide health care for 325,000 veterans.

In the area of the National Institutes of Health Care, 500 research projects will be funded that would not have been funded. This is direct help to the American people.

□ 1115

And in the law enforcement area, 31,000 positions, including 12,000 FBI agents and 2,500 intelligence analysts will be verified, doubling the number of intelligence analysts since 9/11 at the FBI. This is exactly the type of investments we need to do. So from top to bottom, investing in the education, health care, research and law enforcement areas that have been sorriously missed in past budgets, this continuing resolution makes the investments and turns around what were the dire consequences in those areas.

And in addition to that, it makes clear that this is a new day in Washington. We will have no earmarks, no pay raise and no gimmicks. And we are actually turning the page over so we can go forward with the type of budget and the type of appropriations that will continue to put our fiscal house in order, invest in the education and health care and energy and environmental security of this country. This turns the page on a past that was broken and that was failed. And I am proud that we have done that. And I am sure there will be some colleagues, like in the past, that will point to things. But we are pointing in a new direction and turning the page on a broken and failed past and towards a future that, in fact, puts America's priorities and its fiscal house in order.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that the gentleman wouldn't yield. I just wanted to ask one brief question. But I am pleased to yield 1¼ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON), a member of the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I am curious about this new day for the Democrat Party because in the budget that I have a little more control over or interest in, the Ag Committee, they have cut food stamps by \$11 million. I want to make sure my Republican colleagues understand that. That is right. We just heard from the Democrat leader that it is a new day and the Democrats, on their first day of this new day, have cut food stamps \$11 million.

They have also, in this budget, cut conservation programs right and left. They cut, for example, the Equip Program. The Equip Program is a program designed to help farmers with conservation and watershed and water run off and nutrients going into streams. They cut it by \$70 million.

On the conservation operations account, which is an account that helps farmers create habitat for wildlife,

they cut that by \$72 million. It helps with surface water retention so that we can reduce the impact of drought on farmers. They have cut that, again, \$72 million. It also helps with nutrient management.

There is a small dams program that they cut by \$74.2 million, which affects Arkansas, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, North Carolina, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Virginia, Texas, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Oklahoma. And, Mr. Speaker, I am reading out these States so that the Democrat Members from these States can realize that they are, a vote for this bill is a vote to cut their own dams program in their own States by \$74 million.

Now, we have also heard about energy independence. This account also cuts the biomass program in the USDA by \$2 million. But don't think your taxpayers are going to get any of this money. Where does the money go? To the bureaucracy. The FDA, who only asked for a \$20 million increase, gets \$100 million under this omnibus bill.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, let me simply point out to the gentleman who just spoke that our committee took no action whatsoever on all of the items he just mentioned. They are all mandatory programs. All this resolution does is to carry forward the same limitations in those programs that you had in them last year.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON), a member of the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to address some of the lemonade that the gentleman from Illinois was referring to, the impact on NASA in this omnibus continuing resolution.

The Democratic majority rejected my request to be permitted to offer an amendment addressing some of the devastating cuts to NASA that are included in this bill. The Democrat majority has chosen, I believe, partisanship over partnership. The rhetoric about an open process transparency partnership is nothing but a sham. There is no transparency, there is no openness.

This House passed a NASA budget. We passed \$16.7 billion for NASA. Nearly all of the increased funds in that bill went to fund the replacement of the shuttle. Now, this bill drastically reduces those funds. It will result in delays in producing the vehicle to replace the shuttle, the need to continue the shuttle beyond 2010. In my opinion, these cuts in the NASA budget will lead to billions of dollars of increased funds needed in the outyears to keep the Orion Project on track.

There is only one way to interpret this, my colleagues, and that is to say this is a back-handed way to destroy

the manned space flight program, to destroy the work that is going on in places like Kennedy Space Center, Marshall Space Flight Center, Johnson Space Flight Center.

And to say that there are no earmarks in this bill, in my opinion, is a little bit tongue in cheek. Within this budget is a huge transfer of funds that the administration did not ask for. I don't know what else you can call it other than an earmark.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire of my colleague how many speakers he has remaining.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, in response to the chairwoman, we have about four or five speakers left.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. HULSHOF).

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

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, looking back over this week's legislative accomplishments, I am sure democracy has somehow been furthered by our vote on Monday to congratulate the winners of the Orange Bowl, or our debate yesterday commending the two coaches of the Super Bowl.

But today's vote has some significant consequences in that we are about to do great harm to our Nation's land grant colleges by erasing, zeroing out \$186 million in agricultural research grants. Today's vote has real consequences. There are 24 of you on that side of the political aisle that represent colleges that get this money, and I specifically urge five of you that are first-term Members here, Mrs. BOYDA, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. WELCH, to consider the following: Your vote on this continuing resolution zeros out critical research grants in your home districts.

At the University of Missouri-Columbia, my alma mater, this resolution forces 20 faculty reductions, the dismissal of 93 staff and 49 graduate students. You can argue that you open college doors by increasing Pell Grants, and yet those students are going to find the doors of plant and animal science laboratories locked tight.

I urge a "no" vote on this CR.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POMEROY). All Members are reminded to address their comments to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 15 seconds to Mr. OBEY of Wisconsin.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, you can't have it both ways. The previous two speakers claimed that there were earmarks in the bill. Now the gentleman is objecting because we eliminated agricultural earmarks. The fact is, those earmarks are very good things. I agree

with the gentleman. But we promised we would eliminate all earmarks in this bill, and that is what we did, and I make no apology for it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING).

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, rarely in the history of America has a Congress spent more money with less accountability than this Congress is doing today: \$463 billion with 1, count it, 1 hour of accountability. One hour of general debate. Mr. Speaker, that is \$7.7 billion per minute of the people's money that is being spent here today. Families all across America will spend more time deliberating over the purchase of a new dryer than we will spend in debating how we spend \$463 billion of their hard-earned money.

Now, as the Democrats have taken over, Speaker PELOSI recently said, "Democrats believe we must return to accountability by restoring fiscal discipline and eliminating deficit spending."

This is fiscal discipline? This is accountability?

Mr. Speaker, if this becomes law, everybody's share of the national debt will go up from roughly \$28,860 to \$30,399.

This is cutting out deficit spending? This is accountability? This is fiscal responsibility?

Real fiscal responsibility would have been for the Rules Committee to allow for the amendment from the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL) to pass a true CR. That would have saved \$6 billion.

We need to vote this rule down.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today we are considering this Democrat joint resolution, which really is nothing more than a big old omnibus bill. It is a bill that uses what appears to be budget gimmicks and what appears to be some misleading rhetoric to mask their true passion, which is spending more of the taxpayer dollars on government programs. And we know government does not have a revenue problem. Government has a spending problem.

And despite their campaign promises, they are refusing to allow the House to discuss and vote on something that they advocated just last month, which would have been a true continuing resolution to restore fiscal responsibility and to pay down the deficit.

Now, as my colleague from Texas said, Representative CAMPBELL offered an amendment, which would have been a true CR. It would have spent \$6.2 billion less. But they didn't want that. They wanted the omnibus. If they were committed to fiscal responsibility, they would join us in that CR. They

would help pass PAUL RYAN's line item veto bill, and they would show what fiscal responsibility looks like. It is another action of the hold-onto-your-wallet Congress.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the bill.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was before the Rules Committee requesting permission to offer an amendment, and I appreciate the courtesy that was extended to me by the Rules Committee, but would like to highlight, once again, that this omnibus spending bill does not include something that is of high priority to me and a high priority to many of my colleagues on the Republican side, but clearly a priority to Democrats who, last fall, signed a discharge petition attempting to bring to the House floor the issue of disaster assistance for farmers across the country. And despite the fact that 196 Members of the House, Democrat Members of the House, signed a discharge petition, we are still not at the point in which we are able to vote upon providing disaster assistance to farmers across the Midwest and around the country due to weather-related losses.

And I would encourage my colleagues, as we continue to work ourselves through the appropriation process, that we have other opportunities to pursue this. And I hope that the words that were expressed to me yesterday in the Rules Committee that that would be the case remains true.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, how much time is left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington has 30 seconds remaining. The gentlewoman from New York has 15 seconds remaining.

□ 1130

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Speaker, I will be asking Members to vote "no" on the previous question so I can insert Mr. SESSIONS and Mr. WALDEN's amendment that was rejected in the committee. I ask unanimous consent to insert in the RECORD at the appropriate place the amendment that I will be asking my Members to consider if we defeat the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to make certain that everybody understands that the money we are operating under is the money that the Republicans voted last year to spend. We are under their spending levels, not ours, so the complaints ring hollow.

The material previously referred to by Mr. HASTINGS of Washington is as follows:

Amendment in the nature of a substitute:
Strike all after the resolved clause and insert:

“That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H. J. Res. 20) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes. All points of order against the joint resolution and against its consideration are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate on the joint resolution equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations; (2) the amendment in section 2 of this resolution if offered by Representative Walden of Oregon or his designee, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, and shall be separately debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

“SEC. 2. The amendment referred to in section 1 is as follows:

Page 39, after line 24, insert the following:
“SEC. 20327. Of the uncosted balances available from funds appropriated under Section 130 of Division H of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2004 (Public Law 108-199) under the heading ‘Department of Energy, Energy Programs, Science’, as amended by Section 315 of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2006 (Public Law 109-103), for the Iowa Environmental and Education project in Coralville, Iowa, \$44,569,000 is rescinded.”

Page 87, line 6, strike “\$25,423,250,000” and insert “\$25,467,819,000”.

At the end of chapter 5 of title II of the division B being added by section 2, add the following new section:

“SEC. 20522. (a) In addition to amounts otherwise appropriated or made available by this division, \$400,000,000 is appropriated for the purpose of making payments for fiscal year 2007 under sections 102 and 103 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-393; 16 U.S.C. 500 note). The Secretary of the Treasury shall use such funds to make such payments in lieu of using funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, as otherwise authorized by sections 102(b)(3) and 103(b)(2) of such Act.

“(b) There is hereby rescinded an amount equal to .00086 percent of the budget authority provided (or obligation limit imposed) for fiscal year 2007 for any discretionary account pursuant to this division.”

The information contained herein was provided by Democratic Minority on multiple occasions throughout the 109th Congress.)

The Vote on the Previous Question: What It Really Means

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Democratic majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives, (VI, 308-311) de-

scribes the vote on the previous question on the rule as “a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.” To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that “the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition” in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: “The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.”

Because the vote today may look bad for the Democratic majority they will say “the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.” But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the definition of the previous question used in the Floor Procedures Manual published by the Rules Committee in the 109th Congress, (page 56). Here's how the Rules Committee described the rule using information from Congressional Quarterly's “American Congressional Dictionary”: “If the previous question is defeated, control of debate shifts to the leading opposition member (usually the minority Floor Manager) who then manages an hour of debate and may offer a germane amendment to the pending business.”

Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled “Amending Special Rules” states: “a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.” (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.”

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Democratic majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will now put each question on which further proceedings were postponed in the following order:

H. Res. 59, by the yeas and nays;
H. Con. Res. 34, by the yeas and nays;
The previous question on H. Res. 116, by the yeas and nays;

Adoption of H. Res. 116, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL ENGINEERS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 59.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 59, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 417, nays 0, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 64]

YEAS—417

Abercrombie	Brown-Waite,	Davis, Lincoln
Ackerman	Ginny	Davis, Tom
Aderholt	Buchanan	Deal (GA)
Akin	Burgess	DeFazio
Allen	Burton (IN)	DeGette
Altmire	Butterfield	Delahunt
Andrews	Calvert	DeLauro
Arcuri	Camp (MI)	Dent
Baca	Campbell (CA)	Diaz-Balart, L.
Bachmann	Cannon	Diaz-Balart, M.
Bachus	Cantor	Dicks
Baird	Capito	Dingell
Baker	Capps	Doggett
Baldwin	Capuano	Donnelly
Barrett (SC)	Cardoza	Doolittle
Barrow	Carnahan	Doyle
Bartlett (MD)	Carney	Drake
Barton (TX)	Carson	Dreier
Bean	Carter	Duncan
Becerra	Castle	Edwards
Berkley	Castor	Ehlers
Berman	Chabot	Ellison
Berry	Chandler	Ellsworth
Biggert	Clarke	Emanuel
Bilbray	Clay	Emerson
Billirakis	Cleaver	Engel
Bishop (GA)	Clyburn	English (PA)
Bishop (NY)	Coble	Eshoo
Bishop (UT)	Cohen	Etheridge
Blackburn	Cole (OK)	Everett
Blumenauer	Conaway	Fallin
Blunt	Conyers	Fattah
Boehner	Cooper	Feeney
Bonner	Costa	Ferguson
Bono	Costello	Filner
Boozman	Courtney	Flake
Boren	Cramer	Forbes
Boswell	Crenshaw	Fortenberry
Boucher	Crowley	Fox
Boustany	Cubin	Frank (MA)
Boyd (FL)	Cuellar	Franks (AZ)
Boyda (KS)	Culberson	Frelinghuysen
Brady (PA)	Cummings	Gallegly
Brady (TX)	Davis (AL)	Garrett (NJ)
Braley (IA)	Davis (CA)	Gerlach
Brown (SC)	Davis (IL)	Giffords
Brown, Corrine	Davis (KY)	Gillibrand
	Davis, David	Gillmor