

Shadegg Terry Weldon (FL)
Shimkus Thornberry Westmoreland
Smith (NE) Tiahrt Whitfield
Smith (TX) Tiberi Wicker
Souder Turner Wilson (SC)
Stearns Walberg Wolf
Sullivan Walden (OR) Young (AK)
Tancred Wamp Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—9

Alexander Gilchrest McDermott
Buyer Hastert Norwood
Davis, Jo Ann Higgins Paul

□ 1550

So the joint resolution was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HIRE A VETERAN WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 5.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 5, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 411, nays 0, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 73]

YEAS—411

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

Goode Matheson Ryan (WI)
Goodlatte Matsui Salazar
Gordon McCarthy (CA) Sali
Granger McCarthy (NY) Sanchez, Linda
Graves McCaul (TX) T.
Green, Al McCollum (MN) Sanchez, Loretta
Green, Gene McCotter Sarbanes
Grijalva McCreery Saxton
Gutierrez McGovern Schakowsky
Hall (NY) McNulty Schiff
Hall (TX) McHugh Schmidt
Hare McIntyre Schwartz
Harman McKeon Scott (GA)
Hastings (FL) McMorris Scott (VA)
Hayes Rodgers Sensenbrenner
Heller McNeerney Serrano
Herger McNulty Sessions
Herseth Meehan Sestak
Hill Meek (FL) Shadegg
Hinchey Meeks (NY) Shays
Hinojosa Melancon Shea-Porter
Hirono Mica Sherman
Hodes Michaud Shimkus
Hoekstra Millender Shuler
Holden McDonald Shuster
Holt Miller (FL) Simpson
Honda Miller (MI) Sires
Hoolley Miller (NC) Skelton
Hoyer Miller, Gary Slaughter
Hulshof Miller, George Smith (NE)
Inglis (SC) Mitchell Smith (NJ)
Inslee Mollohan Smith (TX)
Israel Moore (KS) Smith (WA)
Issa Moore (WI) Snyder
Jackson (IL) Moran (KS) Solis
Jackson-Lee Moran (VA) Souder
(TX) Murphy, Patrick Space
Jefferson Murphy, Tim Spratt
Jindal Musgrave Stark
Johnson (GA) Myrick Stearns
Johnson (IL) Nadler Stupak
Johnson, E. B. Napolitano Sullivan
Johnson, Sam Neal (MA) Sutton
Jones (NC) Neugebauer Tancred
Jones (OH) Nunes Tanner
Jordan Oberstar Tauscher
Kagen Obey Taylor
Kanjorski Olver Terry
Kaptur Ortiz Thompson (CA)
Keller Pallone Thompson (MS)
Kennedy Pascarelli Thornberry
Kildee Pastor Tiahrt
Kilpatrick Payne Tiberi
Kind Pearce Tierney
King (IA) Pence Towns
King (NY) Perlmutter Turner
Kingston Peterson (MN) Udall (CO)
Kirk Peterson (PA) Udall (NM)
Klein (FL) Petri Upton
Kline (MN) Pickering Van Hollen
Knollenberg Pitts Velázquez
Kucinich Platts Poe
Kuhl (NY) Kuhl (NY) Pomeroy
Lamborn Price (GA) Walberg
Lambson Price (NC) Walden (OR)
Langevin Price (OH) Walsh (NY)
Lantos Putnam Walz (MN)
Larsen (WA) Radanovich Wasserman
Larson (CT) Rahall Schultz
Latham Ramstad Waters
LaTourette Rangel Watson
Lee Rangel Watt
Levin Regula Waxman
Lewis (CA) Rehberg Weiner
Lewis (GA) Reichert Welch (VT)
Lewis (KY) Renzi Weldon (FL)
Linder Reyes Weller
Lipinski Reynolds Westmoreland
LoBiondo Rodriguez Wexler
Loeb sack Rogers (AL) Whitfield
Lofgren, Zoe Rogers (KY) Wicker
Lucas Rogers (MI) Wilson (NM)
Lungrén, Daniel Rohrabacher Wilson (OH)
E. Ros-Lehtinen Wilson (SC)
Lynch Roskam Wolf
Mack Ross Woolsey
Mahoney (FL) Rothman Wu
Maloney (NY) Roybal-Allard Wynn
Manzullo Royce Yarmuth
Marchant Ruppersberger Young (AK)
Markey Rush Young (FL)
Marshall Ryan (OH)

NOT VOTING—23

Ackerman Davis, Jo Ann Hensarling
Alexander Gilchrest Higgins
Brady (TX) Gohmert Hobson
Buyer Hastert Hunter
Camp (MI) Hastings (WA) LaHood

Lowey Murtha Porter
McDermott Norwood Wamp
Murphy (CT) Paul

□ 1558

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unduly delayed for the vote on H. Con. Res. 5, Expressing the Support for the designation and goals of "Hire a Veteran Week." Had I been able to vote, I would have voted "yea" on H. Con. Res. 5.

The Armed Services provide invaluable experience to the men and women who serve this great nation. With this experience, veterans are an extremely valuable asset to our workforce in Southern Nevada and throughout the United States.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to attend rollcall votes today, January 31, 2007. I would like to enter into the RECORD how I intended to vote on the missed rollcall votes:

On roll No. 64, On a Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H. Res. 59, Supporting the goals and ideas of National Engineers Week, I would have voted "yes."

On roll No. 65, On a Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H. Con. Res. 34, Honoring the life of Percy Lavon Julian, I would have voted "yes."

On roll No. 66, On Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 16, I would have voted "yes."

On roll No. 67, On Agreeing to the Resolution on H. Res. 16, I would have voted "yes."

On roll No. 68, On Consideration of the Joint Resolution for H.J. Res. 20, I would have voted "yes."

On roll No. 69, On Tabling the Motion to Reconsider re H.J. Res. 20, I would have voted "yes."

On roll No. 70, On Tabling the Appeal of the Ruling of the Chair re H.J. Res. 20, I would have voted "yes."

On roll No. 71, On the Motion to Recommit with Instructions re H.J. Res. 20, I would have voted "no."

On roll No. 72, On Passage of H.J. Res. 20, I would have voted "yes."

On roll No. 73, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H. Con. Res. 5, Establishing Hire A Veteran Week, I would have voted "yes."

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks during debate on H.J. Res. 20.

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

There was no objection.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend, the majority leader, for information about next week's schedule.

Mr. HOYER. I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the House will meet at 2 p.m. for legislative business. We will consider several bills under suspension. There will be no votes, however, until 6:30.

On Tuesday, the House will meet at 10:30 for morning hour business and noon for legislative business. We will consider additional bills under suspension of the rules. A complete list of the suspension bills for the week will be announced later this week.

On Wednesday and Thursday, the House will meet at 10. In addition to suspension bills, we will consider H.R. 547, the Advanced Fuels Infrastructure Research and Development Act. Now, because we have come to a point where, as you know, the committees have just recently been fully organized, they are starting to have hearings but because we have not produced as much legislation, we have been dealing with a lot of work so far, I know the gentleman will be upset and my colleagues will be upset that they will have to work at home on Friday.

I want to reiterate that. When Members are home, they are working. They are listening to their constituents. They are having town meetings. They are attending meetings. They are attending the chamber of commerce or the Lion's Club or the Rotary or the PTA.

So that, although we will not be here on Friday, I want to assure the public that I know, I know that Mr. BLUNT knows and every Member here knows that when they are not here, they are in their home, they are working on behalf of their constituents. So we will not be here on Friday as scheduled because the flow of work will not be ready for Friday that we can go through the regular order.

As I have told the gentleman and his colleagues, we really do want to get to the regular order so that there are opportunities to consider bills in committees, report them through the Rules Committee, amend them on the floor and proceed as both sides, I think, would like.

□ 1600

Mr. BLUNT. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the information.

I don't want to belabor the point. I certainly do want to join him in sharing this sense of how hard our Members do work and where they work. We talked about this at great length a couple of weeks ago. And I think the early discussion of being on the floor of the House 5 days every single week was widely enjoyed by the late-night comedians and others. And I said at that time, and I still believe, our problem is not that the Members of Congress don't work 5 days a week.

Frankly, our problem is that too many Members of Congress work 7 days

a week. And on those times when we don't have work in Washington and can be in the district, people want to meet with Members in their office. It does give Members a chance to, during the normal workweek, relate to people, activities, and ongoing events that they otherwise can't relate to. I think almost all of our Members are more than willing to take time on a Saturday to meet with people who normally work Monday through Friday. Frankly, most of the people that you would want to meet with see that as a much greater imposition than the Members of Congress who really do work more than 5 days a week at home and in Washington. The work of the Congress is important work, and it doesn't all occur here on the floor of the House while we are voting, nor does it all occur in Washington.

I would like to yield to my friend, the ranking member on the Rules Committee. He has an observation, I think.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding.

I congratulate both the majority leader and the distinguished minority whip for recognizing especially those of us who are in California.

I have a whole series of meetings that I am going to be holding in California in the next couple of days, and it has been virtually impossible to hold any kind of weekday meeting with constituents because of the challenges that we have faced over the past month.

And I know that our 3-hour workdays and then the half hour on a Friday have made it important to note that we have been working here, but it has made it virtually impossible to be able to hold, as I said, any weekday meetings in California.

I would like to just raise a question, Mr. Speaker, to the distinguished majority leader about the issue of the schedule for next week. Now, it is my understanding that the legislation that we are scheduled to consider in the Rules Committee may come up under an open amendment process, allowing us an opportunity to have amendments proposed on the floor. The thing that concerns me is that while we have had a wide range of measures brought to the floor under suspension of the rules, I have looked back at this legislation that we are going to be addressing next week, and while it will be wonderful to have an open amendment process, it will be great if that, in fact, is going to be decided by the Rules Committee, it will be a wonderful thing to be seeing, but the fact is when this legislation was last considered, it was considered under suspension of the rules and passed unanimously without a recorded vote. A voice vote, in fact, was all that was necessary.

So I will, just for the record, Mr. Speaker, say to the distinguished majority leader, and I thank the distinguished minority whip for yielding to me, that I am concerned about the notion of utilizing an open amendment

process on a matter that is non-controversial and very easily could be considered under suspension of the rules if it is being done solely for the purpose of saying, aha, we have moved beyond closed rules and we are now considering issues under an open amendment process when, in fact, there may not even be any amendments proposed because when this last came before us, it was considered under suspension of the rules.

I thank my friend for yielding, and if you would like to yield to the majority leader to respond.

Mr. BLUNT. I would be pleased to yield to my friend, the majority leader, for a response to that.

Mr. HOYER. I will say to my friend this is such a difficult process on this side of the aisle. We considered last week a piece of legislation, and one of your Members went to the Rules Committee and asked for an amendment. We gave him an amendment, and then he wrote, apparently, and it caused a great deal of controversy, that we allowed the amendment and he really didn't want the amendment.

So then we came to the floor with the amendment still allowed. Of course, he didn't have to offer it. Nobody was forcing him to offer it. But there was great consternation that we had allowed the amendment and, indeed, a substitute, which you apparently didn't want either. So it is very difficult for us. Now we bring a bill that has an open rule and it is so lacking in controversy that it ought to be perhaps a closed rule or a suspension.

We will try to figure out what you really want, and when we do, we will try to do something that pleases you. We are having difficulty so far.

Mr. BLUNT. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, I think the point my good friend from California is making, and I would like to emphasize, is we hope we are now moving to rules that are open when possible, that allow amendments when an open rule is not possible. I think the point he was making was that hopefully this just isn't to go on the record and say, as my good friend just did, well, once we allowed you an amendment that the Member decided he didn't want and then you complained about that. We don't want this to be cited as, well, don't you remember the time we gave you the open rule on a bill that passed unanimously without amendment in the last Congress? It is time to move on.

My good friend from Maryland knows my high regard for him, and I am going to do my very best, at these weekly opportunities to talk about the schedule, to not just complain about the process. But I do know that my friend, who has been here longer than I have and understands and appreciates the process in the House, knows that it is to everybody's advantage if we get to the place where we are debating these bills, where the ideas that are brought to the floor can stand the challenge of debate and amendment, and we need to get

there. As I said last week, I am prepared to look forward, as disappointed as I was about the way the previous few weeks have been handled, but there are only so many weeks that you can just be satisfied to think that, well, I am hopeful that next week will be better, and I guess here we would be hopeful that the open rule would not just be the example of the open rule we got on this kind of bill, but the beginning of real debate and real opportunity to amend in this Congress.

I would like to yield again to my friend.

Mr. DREIER. I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to say to the majority leader that I didn't bring up the issue of process, but since my very good friend and classmate from Maryland did bring up the issue of process, pointing to the fact that an amendment was made in order even when that Member did not want to have the amendment made in order, which was clearly stated in a letter that was submitted to the distinguished Chair of the Rules Committee, recognizing that that was an unprecedented move, because I will tell you, having served as chairman of the Rules Committee, time and time again, we would have Members testify before the Rules Committee, making a request that amendments be made in order, and then we would get a letter from that Member asking that that amendment be withdrawn, and every time we would immediately disseminate that.

So the only reason that there was a great deal of consternation on the issue that my friend has raised is that the action that was taken by the Rules Committee was completely unprecedented. In fact, in all the research that we did, we were never able to find any instance that ever before, under either the Democratic majority or the Republican majority, had action like that been taken. So that led us to be concerned. Similarly, as we look at the prospect of moving ahead with very important legislation that passed unanimously without any amendment, I would simply say, Mr. Speaker, that to simply use, as the distinguished minority whip has said, that as an argument to say we provided open rules is, I think, a little bit of a stretch.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from California. Of course, the gentleman to which he refers, as he knows, voted for the rule. In addition, as the gentleman knows, we gave your side the opportunity to have unanimous consent to amend the rule. You chose not to ask for that. We would not have objected to it. It gives us both good talking points, I suppose, but I think the point of this whole discussion is we want to get beyond talking points.

I say to my friend, and everybody in this House knows that Roy Blunt and Steny Hoyer are good friends who

spend time together and respect one another, like one another. It is very difficult, I know, having been in your position for 4 years, not to take the opportunity to express grievances about what you believe is not being done that is fair to particularly the minority side. I understand that.

I simply want to say that we intend, as we have said, and one of the reasons we are not meeting Friday is because we have told committees we want them to do the regular order, have hearings, have votes in committee, bring bills to the Rules Committee, allow amendments, and as a result, they have said that is going to take us a little more time. So we do not have work to do. And we are not going to hold Members here, as Roy Blunt and I have discussed, if we don't have work to do. But we are going to try to get to substance.

I will say, for instance, on today's bill, we were very pleased that 57 Members on your side of the aisle voted with us on this. It was not a bipartisan two or three or four or five or six Members. A quarter of your caucus, indeed over a quarter of your caucus, voted for this bill. It was a bill that we needed to get through on substance. We think that speaks well for the substance, and that is what we are really talking about. We want to get to substance in a fair way. And we want to work with you, Mr. DREIER.

Certainly, I want to work with my good friend, the Republican whip, who is, I think, very sincere in his desire to make sure that we have legislation move through this body in a way that all the participants can feel they got a fair shot, whether they win or lose.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his response.

I would say that while we don't want to debate the bill again that we voted on today, all of the Republicans voted for the motion that would have improved the bill. Certainly the option of the February 15 deadline has impact. I don't even want to argue the point that some of our Members then voted for final passage, but all of our Members would have liked to have had a more wide-ranging debate on the points that were raised in the motion to recommit that all of our Members voted for.

We also noted in the bill we just passed that rather than allocating funds to Members' committees and other offices of the House, this bill, essentially a bill that contained the funding for half of the discretionary spending, provided a lump sum in excess of \$1 billion. I think the exact quote that I will refer to for the leader was "to be allocated in accordance with the allocation plans submitted by the chief administrative officer and approved by the Committee on Appropriations."

A pretty wide-ranging ability to now set specific allocations and for the Appropriations Committee to approve those.

I am wondering specifically, does the majority intend to use these funds to create a new committee that is not currently in existence or currently authorized?

I will yield to my friend for a response.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Certainly, those dollars which are allocated in contemplation of the administrative officer having an ability after a change, obviously, in management, if you will, to some degree, to have some flexibility, and as they plan, we will have a better idea of how they are going to spend that money, which will obviously have to be approved in the funding resolution out of House Administration, brought to this floor and voted upon by the Members. But certainly, parts of that fund would be available if the House decided to create a committee. You refer to the Select Committee on, I am sure, Energy.

Mr. BLUNT. I am. Or other select committees but that one, specifically.

Mr. HOYER. Or other select committees, if the House chose to do that through whatever mechanism it chose to do that. Yes. The answer to your question is a portion of that money would be available for that objective.

Mr. BLUNT. And if I understand what my good friend said, that money would be available, but would be authorized specifically by the funding resolution that would come from the House Administration?

Mr. HOYER. Of course, any committee, select committee or otherwise, unless there was a separate bill appropriating money towards that committee, we would expect that to be in the funding resolution for committees out of House Administration.

Mr. BLUNT. Again, reclaiming my time, just to be sure I am right on this, the funding resolution would come before the entire body before the appropriating committee would decide to do their allocation out of this one billion-plus dollars?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. HOYER. I don't know that that refers to all the money. That probably would not be accurate. And if I go further than I have already gone, I may be incorrect, and I don't want to misinform either you or the body because I have not talked to either House Administration or to Mr. OBEY about the specific allocation of these funds. Obviously, if the CR passes, they are appropriated to this fund for the CAO under the language that you read subject to the Appropriations Committee's approval.

□ 1615

However, in terms of the select committee or committee, my expectation would be that that specific item, not necessarily other items, would be subject to the funding resolution out of House Administration and come to this body.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time I have here, does the gentleman have a sense on the specific Select Committee on Global Warming and the Environment, or whatever it might be called, when that issue may come to the floor as a question?

Mr. HOYER. Well, if it is included in the House Administration funding resolution, and I am not saying that it will be, it may be in some other vehicle. But, if it did, that usually comes middle of March, late March, so that the committees can have a sense of what their funding capabilities are.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank my friend for that information. I am sure that all of our Members, as they hear the news about the ability to work in their districts on Friday, will be hoping to be on a plane Thursday night or Friday morning. I am not sure that I listened carefully to your sense of what would be the end of the day on Thursday since we would not be here on Friday. I am sure you said that, but if you would repeat.

Mr. HOYER. I don't think I said a time on Thursday. As you know as well, perhaps better than I do over the last years, particularly as you were the leader, you cannot always predict the time frame. But I would hope on Thursday we would get out at a reasonable hour to facilitate Members returning home.

Mr. BLUNT. Would you expect that the Thursday schedule would meet the standard that we have been trying to set on the Friday schedule, if we can at all?

Mr. HOYER. Yes.

Mr. BLUNT. That is all I need to know.

Mr. HOYER. Let me retract that because I don't want to make a rule on that.

Mr. BLUNT. I understand.

Mr. HOYER. I want to have Members be very clear. If we are able to do our work within the time frame of Thursday, it may well be a late Thursday. When I say late, 5, 6, 7 o'clock Thursday, as opposed to 1 or 2 o'clock. So I maybe answered too quickly on the Friday schedule. Because on Friday we very definitely will be trying to get out, as I have said, no later than 2 o'clock and as close to 1 as we can. That gives us 4 hours. As you know, we have agreed that we will go in at 9. So that gives us 4 hours of legislative time to work on Fridays.

Committees, as I might tell my friend, you might be interested, the Government Operations Committee will be having hearings on Friday of next week, notwithstanding the fact that we are not here. So not only are they working at home, but there also will be people working here in Washington, notwithstanding the fact that we are not on the floor.

Mr. BLUNT. I would also like to say, Mr. Speaker, as it might make that answer easier for the future, I did not mean in any way to set a standard for future weeks. But I was thinking in

terms of this week, looking at 2 days of suspensions, 1 day of a bill that we have had on suspension before, even though it would have a rule, that I would think it would not be an unreasonable goal for us to set to get our, particularly our west coast Members, on the way home on late Thursday afternoon, rather than having to wait until Friday morning.

But I would also assume, having done both of the jobs you have held in the last few months, that there will be times when we will not necessarily need to be here on Friday, but to meet that goal we may have to work late enough on Thursday that many Members would not be on Thursday flights. I clearly understand that.

Mr. HOYER. I don't want to prolong this, but I do want to say that the gentleman is correct in terms of, that is why I answered glibly and quickly. So I think the gentleman may be correct. I don't want to pledge that, but he may be correct because of the factors that he has pointed out.

I would say, in closing, that I know there has been some, joviality is a kind word, about what Mr. DREIER mentioned in the schedule getting out at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

But I will say with all due respect to my friend, notwithstanding that joviality, we believe that the last 3 weeks in terms of what this House has done in terms of its ethical standards, in terms of dealing with the safety of Americans in the 9/11 bill, in terms of dealing with the minimum wage, energy, dealing with college costs, dealing with prescription drugs and dealing with stem cell research, dealing with passing a CR that has funding for work that sat on the tarmac, if you will, and never got off the ground to the President for approximately 14 months or 13 months. We believe that we have provided a schedule in which we have done very substantial work. We hope the American people are pleased with that, and we continue to try to do that.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank the gentleman for yielding back.

I know many of my colleagues on the floor assume that yielding that time gave you a good chance to talk about the last few weeks, and there are things to talk about. But I am sure you are getting plenty of discussion from all of the Members of the House, including the Members of the majority, about the schedule. I think that the determination for next week, which I believe would have been the first 5-day week we have had scheduled to work all 5 days, I think the determination of next week shows the leader's willingness to look at the facts of the week, rather than to be pinned down to a standard that doesn't necessarily let the Members do all of the work they need to do in the various places they need to do it. I am glad to see that change.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR
WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON
WEDNESDAY NEXT

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

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

There was no objection.

NO PLAN FROM DEMOCRATS

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle for their plan for winning the war on terror and for the current situation in Iraq. The only things that we have heard from Democrats has been criticism.

I also want to point out an article in today's Wall Street Journal and insert the entire article in the RECORD. The article is entitled, "Progress in Baghdad"; and it says, Capitol Hill has probably been too busy running for political cover to notice, but the last few days in Iraq have actually featured good news, as the government seems to be making some progress on key political and security issues.

And it ends with, the Bush administration has itself made many mistakes trying to micromanage Iraq's political development, but it now seems to understand that it is fated to deal with the Shiite-led government it has. Congressmen who are sincere in wanting to take the Iraq issue off the table in 2008 could help by showing a similar combination of resolve and humility.

I think we need the resolve and humility to say that we are there for victory and that failure is not an option.

[From the Wall Street Journal]

PROGRESS IN BAGHDAD

Capitol Hill has probably been too busy running for political cover to notice. But the last few days in Iraq have actually featured good news, as the government seems to be making some progress on key political and security issues.

One step forward is that Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has won parliamentary backing for his Baghdad security plan. This means the elected representatives of Iraq's Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds remain capable of compromise and are willing to give the new strategy a chance to work.

There's also evidence that the Baghdad plan is having an effect. Yes, al Qaeda bombs targeted the Shiite Ashoura holiday as expected. But there are also widespread reports of Sunni jihadists fleeing the capital in anticipation of a crackdown. Prime Minister Maliki has already started moving against Shiite militias, which might explain an apparent drop in sectarian violence. No one should get overconfident, but clearly the bad guys are taking the joint U.S.-Iraqi effort to pacify the capital seriously. Meanwhile, the weekend saw an encouraging performance by the Iraqi security forces who took control of the Najaf area only about a month ago. Acting on their own intelligence, Iraqi police