

issue; it's an American issue. It's an American issue.

We want to work together to create a real plan to combat hateful and often racist rhetoric that affects all of us. I ask my colleagues to do the right thing and not the political easy thing and to support real immigration reform.

URGING SUPPORT FOR H.R. 4102, STOP OUTSOURCING SECURITY ACT

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Today the New York Times reports that at least 14 of the 17 shootings from the September 16 Blackwater incident in Iraq were unjustified and violated deadly force rules.

Even though the FBI concluded that Blackwater, a for-profit contractor, used excessive force, there is no guarantee that anyone will be punished for these killings.

On Monday, the front page of the New York Times ran a story titled "Security Guard Fires From Convoy, Killing Iraqi Driver." The shooter was an employee of DynCorp, and the victim an Iraqi taxi driver. The details of the incident are still unclear, but one thing is certain. The problem of trigger-happy contractors isn't confined to one company; it applies to all private security contractors.

The longer we wait to fix this problem, the worse the situation is going to get for the Iraqis and for our troops. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Stop Outsourcing Security Act, H.R. 4102, to phase out unaccountable private security contractors before they do any more damage.

CAUTIONING SENIORS REGARDING PRIVATE MEDICARE INSURANCE OPTIONS

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

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, the Medicare open enrollment period begins tomorrow, November 15, and runs through the end of the year. Across the country, private HMOs have placed large newspaper ads and are running TV ads to convince seniors to sign up for their private Medicare insurance.

I am here to advise seniors to be very cautious. These private HMO insurance salesmen are on the streets and are oftentimes luring our seniors into private Medicare coverage that they do not need. If they leave traditional Medicare and sign up for a private HMO, oftentimes they will lose access to their doctor.

Be very cautious. Sons and daughters, grandkids across America, help your parents and grandparents sort through this myriad of options under private Medicare. In Florida, you can seek independent advice from the Department of Elder Affairs and the

SHINE Volunteers. Seek independent advice and be very cautious with these private Medicare options.

WARNING AGAINST IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ

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

Mr. BAIRD. My colleagues, as someone who opposed the invasion of Iraq and believes it was one of the most egregious mistakes in the history of this country, I rise today to implore you to not make a mistake today by demanding that we begin an immediate withdrawal.

The facts on the ground are that the situation is improving in Iraq. Courageous Americans have given their lives and time away from their families to make that happen. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have died in a conflict that we created. We have a chance now to try to improve the situation.

Progress is being made. Do not let anyone today say it is not. Violence is down. Political leaders are reaching out across the aisle. Shias are meeting with Sunnis. Sunnis are meeting with Shias. They need more time to succeed, and an insecure situation will undermine the progress, not further it.

We need to have more time to debate this resolution today. We need to take the good parts of it, keep those in, but abandon this requirement for an immediate withdrawal.

There is a big difference between 1 year, which this measure says we have to be out in, or a 10-year horizon. We should find the nuance now that we can agree on.

DEMOCRATS CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR A CHANGE OF DIRECTION IN IRAQ

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, 2007 has been the deadliest year for American troops in Iraq. No doubt that a change of direction is needed, but President Bush refuses to change course. He envisions a world where our troops will still be on the ground in Iraq 10 years from now.

This Democratic Congress rejects such a plan. And this week we will once again consider legislation that will require President Bush to redeploy our troops out of Iraq while providing our troops in harm's way with the resources that they need.

President Bush has asked Congress for an additional \$200 billion for Iraq. This House will instead vote on a \$50 billion package that will require the immediate start of the redeployment of U.S. forces out of Iraq. The legislation sets a goal of having nearly every troop out of Iraq by the end of next year. That is a significant change in the course of the war, and it is a change that will finally hold Iraq accountable for its future course.

Madam Speaker, this Congress will continue to fight to change President Bush's 10-year, trillion-dollar war. We are committed to bringing our troops home soon, repairing the readiness of our military, and refocusing our efforts to fight terrorism around the world.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1429, IMPROVING HEAD START FOR SCHOOL READINESS ACT OF 2007

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 813 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 813

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 1429) to reauthorize the Head Start Act, to improve program quality, to expand access, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. TAUSCHER). The gentlewoman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

GENERAL LEAVE

Madam Speaker, I also ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 813.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, House Resolution 813 provides for consideration of the conference report for H.R. 1429, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007. This is the standard rule for a conference report. It waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration. It also provides that the conference report shall be considered as read.

Madam Speaker, for over 40 years Head Start has served as the premier educational and developmental program for America's children, more than 20 million American children and their families. Head Start works. Head Start works because it is a well-researched, comprehensive initiative that combines all of the children's educational needs, their health care needs, and it requires parental involvement. Years later, after four decades of Head Start, the research shows that children that participate in Head Start are

more likely to graduate from high school than their peers.

Head Start is a comprehensive approach to child health nutrition and learning, and it is one of our best tools in the struggle to close the achievement gap. The achievement gap for children in poverty in America must be tackled, and Head Start tackles the achievement gap through cognitive social and emotional child development, each of which is a key contributor to entering elementary school ready to succeed.

Today, 20 percent of America's 12 million children under the age of 6 unfortunately live in poverty. We know that a family's income level greatly affects their child's access to educational opportunities. The reality of poverty for so many American children in poverty is tied to their low success rates in schools.

But in America, family income simply should not impede a child's educational opportunities, and this is where Head Start comes in to level the playing field. Back home in Florida in my community in the Tampa Bay area, over 5,300 children are served by Head Start. But we've got thousands of children that are eligible and are on the waiting list? Because previous Congresses have failed to properly support our Head Start kids, and this White House has flat-lined budgets over the years; so our kids merely have been treading water.

□ 1045

There have been no improvements or increases in funding since 2003. And with inflation, it has been very difficult to maintain the well-known, high-quality elements in Head Start. But the good news is that this Congress will change that today and make the smartest investment in our country's future workforce. And the research statistics bear repeating; children that participate in Head Start are more likely to graduate from high school.

We're going to put more children on a path to success today when we pass this bill and this rule. We're going to improve teacher and classroom quality. We're going to strengthen the focus on school readiness. We're going to expand access so children that are on the waiting list can enter Head Start classrooms. We're going to strengthen those all-important comprehensive services of health care and nutrition. We're going to increase the number of children in early Head Start because the research also shows that it is critical for child brain development that they have interaction by the age of 3, when their brains are developing. We're going to focus on allowing more homeless children to enroll and do a better job for children who are just learning English.

This year marks four decades of success for this holistic wraparound initiative that empowers all of us. These children are eager and ready to learn if we give them the tools.

The administration's slow-motion cuts to Head Start will now be reversed because this Congress, in a bipartisan way, but led by Democrats, is committed to raising strong and healthy children, and Head Start prepares our children to succeed in school and in life.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my friend the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR) for the time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It's important for the future of our children that they develop the skills and receive the education necessary to make them a success later in life. Unfortunately, many children begin their education without a proper foundation, putting them at a disadvantage that has long-term effects on their education. We must do all we can so that low-income children do not begin their education at a disadvantage, and that is why Head Start was created.

In order to give the children the proper foundation they need to begin their education, the Head Start program provides comprehensive early child development services to about 900,000 children from low-income families. These services prepare children to enter kindergarten with a proper educational foundation for their continued educational success to hopefully break the chain of poverty. The underlying bipartisan conference report builds on the success of the program and alleviates some of its shortcomings.

The bill authorizes over \$7 billion in fiscal year 2008. For fiscal year 2009, it authorizes a 4.1 percent increase. And for fiscal year 2010, there's an additional 4.5 percent increase.

It is important that the children in Head Start receive the best education possible. There are several provisions in the conference report that will help with that goal. First, the legislation seeks to ensure that a greater number of early Head Start teachers are better trained and educated in early childhood development, with a focus on infant toddler development, no later than September 30, 2012. Additionally, the conference report requires that at least 50 percent of Head Start teachers nationwide in center-based programs have a baccalaureate or advanced degree in early childhood education or related field by September 30, 2013.

Madam Speaker, competition encourages better quality. As recommended by a 2005 GAO study, this legislation seeks to increase competition among Head Start grantees to help weed out poor performers and foster stronger programs.

There is also a need for greater oversight of the program grantees. This legislation requires Head Start agencies to create a formal structure of program governance for assessing the quality of services received by the Head Start children and families, and

for making decisions related to program design and implementation.

The bill also seeks greater transparency and disclosure regarding how Head Start funds are spent. This will help prevent abuse and further ensure that Federal Head Start funds reach the disadvantaged children that they are meant to reach.

The conference report kept the House's unanimously passed motion to instruct language limiting the compensation of a Head Start employee to Executive Level II, which equals \$168,000. This is to prevent Head Start employees from receiving excessive salaries and bonuses, like in some past experiences.

With regard to a child's eligibility in a Head Start program, the conference report allows Head Start agencies to serve children whose parents earn 130 percent above the poverty level. The conference report caps the amount of participants that can be served at the increased level to 35 percent of all participants, and only if the agency can prove that they are serving all eligible participants at the poverty level.

Other important provisions included in the conference report are to continue the eligibility of faith-based organizations as Head Start agencies. Head Start has a proud history of inclusion of faith-based organizations. Approximately 80 grantees have religious affiliations.

With regard to our children's safety, the conference report requires background checks for those who transport children to Head Start centers.

I wish to thank both Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MCKEON for their bipartisan work on this important legislation. This important legislation goes to show, Madam Speaker, that when we are willing to work together and compromise, we can bring forth good legislation with bipartisan support.

I urge my colleagues to support the conference report, which I believe is instrumental to the educational success of many children.

At this time, Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, at this time I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California, a member of the Education and Labor Committee and an outspoken advocate for America's kids, Ms. WOOLSEY.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, today we're going to reauthorize Head Start and reaffirm, through this conference report, our commitment to this very, very valuable program.

When I came here 15 years ago, I was insisting that my married children make me a grandmother, and they told me it was just none of my business. But since then, I now have five grandchildren among my four families of young adults, and all of my grandchildren go to preschool. And they are lucky because they have working parents who are professionals who can

pick out very good schools for them and make sure, the oldest child is 7½, and he's the only one in school, he is a second grader, but ensure that when my grandchildren enter grade school, elementary school, that they know what's going on. I mean, I'm telling you, I can't believe it. These kids read, they write, they know their numbers, they know their alphabet, they can play Monopoly, and they aren't even in kindergarten yet. That's what every kid in America deserves, and that's what Head Start does.

Head Start evens the playing field so that the fortunate children in my family aren't the only ones that enter elementary school having read books, having understood that you sit down in a classroom, that you have social needs that you have to learn to deal with when you're a young person and you're going to be dealing with other young people in a classroom situation.

I feel so fortunate, but I also feel so thankful that in a very bipartisan way, under the chairmanship of Mr. MILLER and the good leadership of Mr. McKEON, we were able to pass legislation that will finally bring to this floor a Head Start bill.

We need to increase the Head Start funding, of course. We aren't covering every eligible child in the United States, and we must do that over time. It's hard to do when you're spending \$1.5 trillion in Iraq. But we must get our priorities in order, and one of our top priorities must be our children. Our children are 25 percent of our population, but guess what? They are 100 percent of our future.

We must support programs like Head Start that ensure that our future, when we become really old people and these young people are running our world and running our Congress, they know what they're doing.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished ranking member of the Rules Committee, Mr. DREIER.

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

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this conference report, and I want to join in commending first the managers on both sides of the aisle, our friends from Florida, Ms. CASTOR and Mr. DIAZ-BALART, and of course Mr. MILLER, Mr. McKEON, and Mr. CASTLE, and all those who have been involved.

The Head Start program is a very important program. It has proved to be successful. And I'm pleased that we have a measure that is going to, I believe, become law and ensure that we are able, as we look towards preparing children for that very critical K-12 education, which we all know is facing very serious challenges, the Head Start program can help as they launch into that challenge.

Madam Speaker, I want to take my time, and Mr. DIAZ-BALART and I were

just talking about an op-ed piece that was written by the former staff director of the Committee on Rules, Don Wolfensberger, and it got a response in today's Roll Call that I think is a very important one. And I think that, in light of the fact that we're debating rules here, this is a debate on the rule, and we've seen some real challenges when it has come to ensuring that the American people have their right to be heard here on the House floor. I think that I will share an article. And at this time, I would like to insert this article into the RECORD, Mr. WOLFENBERGER's op-ed piece.

[From Roll Call, Nov. 12, 2007]

MINORITY'S MOTION TO RECOMMIT SHOULD NOT BE CURTAILED

(By Don Wolfensberger)

It is the height of political arrogance for the majority party in the House of Representatives to dictate which minority party motions are legitimate and which are not. Yet that is exactly what the Democratic leadership is threatening through possible House rules changes governing the motion to recommit.

The motion to recommit a bill to committee with instructions to amend it was originally used primarily as a majority party device to make last-minute, minor corrections before final passage. All that changed in 1909 when Speaker Joe Cannon (R-Ill.) temporarily headed off a bipartisan effort to amend House rules and remove him as chairman and a member of the Rules Committee. Cannon recognized conservative Democratic Rep. John Fitzgerald (N.Y.) to offer a substitute amendment that, among other things, guaranteed the minority a final opportunity to get a vote on its position using the motion to recommit with instructions. (Cannon would still be booted from Rules in a bipartisan revolt the following year.)

The minority's right was slowly chipped away when Democrats last ran the House. Beginning in the early 1980s, Democratic Speakers and their Rules Committee majority minions used an obscure 1934 precedent to justify not only limiting the contents of the minority's instructions but also eventually denying them the right to offer any instructions. Republicans fiercely fought these limits at every turn and vowed that if they came to power the minority's right to offer its alternative in a motion to recommit with instructions would be fully restored. They fulfilled that promise upon taking control of the House in January 1995, and the Democratic minority enjoyed the right unimpeded over the 12 years of Republican control.

Nothing in the guaranteed right limits the minority to a motion that immediately adopts an amendment—the “forthwith” motion. The minority also may move to send a bill physically back to committee with instructions to hold more hearings, conduct a study or make specified changes in the legislation. This latter device, to recommit with instructions to report back an amendment “promptly” (instead of “forthwith”) has been unnerving Democratic leaders every time Republicans have used it to raise politically sensitive issues. In two instances the majority withdrew bills from the floor rather than risk having them sent back to committee.

The most recent example was the leadership's decision to pull the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act amendments in the face of a likely GOP motion to recommit with instructions to “promptly” report back an amendment to exempt from FISA court coverage any surveillance of al-Qaida or other terrorist groups.

Democratic Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (Md.) argues that such motions are offered simply for “political purposes” rather than for the “substantive purposes” of “trying to change policy.” At the same time he concedes that Democrats used such tactics when they were in the minority. The only apparent difference is that Republicans have had a higher success rate with their recommit motions (though the only ones to succeed so far have been “forthwith” motions).

The majority is attempting to impose its notion that the only “legitimate” role of the minority party is to offer substantive policy alternatives in their recommit motions for instant incorporation in a bill. One way Democrats might try to enforce this concept is to only allow the minority to offer “forthwith” motions to recommit so that legislation can move immediately to final passage after the motion is voted. This “amend it now or forever hold your peace” approach overlooks one important role of an opposition party, and that is to oppose.

Opposing legislation does not carry with it the obligation to offer responsible policy alternatives that conform to the majority's timetable for passing a bill (especially when the minority is being blocked from offering any amendments on a record-breaking 35 percent of major bills). Opposition may include not only trying to defeat a bill, but also to slow it down, including sending it back to a committee for more work.

Yes, a straight motion to recommit without instructions would accomplish this same purpose. But who is to say that the minority should not be able to score its own political points by sending a bill back to committee with a message attached? After all, the majority routinely gets plenty of PR mileage out of reporting and passing bills on its political agenda. To assert that the minority is playing politics with its motions to recommit while the majority is somehow above such things in advancing its bills is laughable.

The difference, the majority would have us believe, is that it is achieving a serious public policy purpose for the betterment of humankind while the minority is merely engaging in “cheap shot” political tricks with no redeeming social value. That may be true at times, but the minority should be allowed to stand or fall on public and media perceptions of its actions—whether they be seen as foolish or heroic. The majority also will stand or fall on public perceptions of the quality of its legislative enactments and may well look just as foolish if well-intentioned bills produce bad results.

At a time when Congressional Democrats are under heavy fire and record low public approval ratings for a lackluster performance (including their inability to put even one of the 12 regular appropriations bills on the president's desk over a month after the start of the fiscal year), they would do well to spend more time honing their governance skills and less trying to control minority party behavior.

This paper, Roll Call, which we all get around here on the Hill, has been very critical of whichever party has been in control. I will say that when we were in the majority, this paper was often very critical of us. And today they have an editorial. Again, this is not Republicans speaking. It's not Republicans whining. It's not Republicans claiming that their rights are being trampled on. This is from the editorial page of today's Roll Call, and the editorial is entitled as follows, Madam Speaker, it's entitled “Let 'Em Move.”

“Embarrassed though House Democratic leaders may be by Republican

success in proposing, and, often, passing politically loaded motions to recommit, it would be an outrage for the majority to limit the minority's right to do so.

"Despite promises to manage the House on a more open basis than Republicans did during their 12-year rule, Democrats have been every bit as authoritarian, prohibiting any floor amendments, for instance, at more than double the rate of the previous Congress." I'm going to repeat that, Madam Speaker, "more than double the rate of the previous Congress," the number of closed rules that they've had. "Motions to recommit legislation to committees with instructions on how to alter it are often the only opportunity the minority has to affect the legislative process."

"When they actually win a majority on the House floor, because a number of Democrats vote with Republicans, they constitute a huge embarrassment to Democratic leaders. This has happened 21 times this year, versus practically never during Republican rule, and each time Republicans have crowed that Speaker NANCY PELOSI and her team 'have lost control of the floor.'" And let me remind you, Madam Speaker, I am simply reading from the editorial page of today's Roll Call.

They go on to say, "Democratic leaders routinely fume at the practice, as when House Majority Leader STENY HOYER accused the GOP of using the motion 'for political purposes, not substantive purposes . . . not to change policy, but to try to construct difficult political votes for Members,' meaning potentially vulnerable Democrats."

□ 1100

"As Roll Call reported last month, Democrats are searching for ways to change House rules to limit the minority's right to propose motions to recommit. They have done so before, so far without success—once, because Republicans halted proceedings on the House floor to protest the attempt. We suggest that Democrats just drop the idea and learn to live with the GOP motions as a legitimate part of legislative work in a democracy."

"It's certainly true that many of the Republican motions have been politically designed, especially repeated motions to deny government benefits to illegal immigrants. Any Democrat who cast a vote against the measure, even if government aid was already barred by law, might well fear that it would be used by a potential opponent in a political commercial."

"At the same time, many of the GOP motions have been substantive and have gained majority support because they contained popular ideas or posed politically difficult choices." Roll Call goes on to write, "Examples include a ban on Federal funding to colleges that prohibit military recruiting on campus and an increase in funding for missile defense."

Madam Speaker, this Roll Call editorial reads, "On two occasions, GOP

motions were so threatening to the Democrats' purposes that they actually pulled legislation on terrorist wiretapping and voting rights for the District of Columbia."

"Rather than limit one of the minority's few rights to affect legislation, we suggest that Democrats expand those rights by allowing Republicans to offer amendments on the floor. Would some of them be 'purely political'? Of course. But more open and democratic debate also might produce better policy and reduce partisan rancor."

Now, again, Madam Speaker, those are not my words. Those are the words of the editorial board of the Roll Call as printed in today's paper. I want to say again, this paper was often critical of us when we were in the majority, and they have now, I believe, been right on target in pointing to the fact that the notion of trying to deny the American people their opportunity to be heard through this motion to recommit would be a horrible thing. I believe the Democratic majority, Madam Speaker, should, in fact, follow this encouragement from Roll Call and allow more amendments to be made in order.

I also want to say that I will join with my friend when he seeks to defeat the previous question on this rule so for the 11th time, we will be seeking to bring assistance to our veterans to the floor. This is Veterans Week. We marked Veterans Day Monday. I will say that it is absolutely imperative that any Member of the House who wants to ensure that we have the resources necessary for our veterans should vote "no" on the previous question so that we can, in fact, get that assistance that they so desperately need.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, I always enjoy hearing the ranking member from the Rules Committee, because 1 year ago, the American people demanded a new direction, to make America safer, to help restore the American Dream, to restore accountability and fiscal responsibility to the people's government. This 110th Congress has brought new faces, new energy and a steadfast commitment to a new direction.

In January, the first female Speaker of the House in American history gavelled open the Congress in honor of America's children, and we will keep that commitment today by acting on the Head Start bill in this rule.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. CASTOR. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. I would simply say to my friend, I joined in heralding the selection of my fellow Californian, Ms. PELOSI, as the first woman, the first Italian American Speaker of the House of Representatives. It was a great day for this institution. I should say she was the first Californian as well. But I will say this, the record that was outlined in today's Roll Call is one which

can't be denied by either the Members of the majority or the minority.

I thank my friend for yielding.

Ms. CASTOR. I am happy to debate the record of this Congress under Democratic leadership. The Congress is focused on a new direction, first, to make America safer. We have already taken action to implement the 9/11 Commission recommendations to protect America from terrorism. This Congress has passed the largest veterans health care funding increase in the history of the VA. We have adopted energy security legislation that will reduce the threat of global climate change. We continue to hold the White House accountable for this unending war in Iraq.

In addition, this Congress is restoring the American Dream because now the law of the land is the largest college age expansion since the GI Bill in 1944, where we raised the Pell Grant and we cut the interest rate on student loans. It has been this Congress, and this is important if you are keeping track of the record of this Congress, it was this Congress that raised the minimum wage for millions of Americans. We have also adopted an innovation agenda promoting 21st century jobs in a global economy. We have sent aid to the gulf coast for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and for the millions of Americans that continue to struggle day to day with the impact of those disasters. And we are fighting for health care, to expand health care to 10 million more American children.

Madam Speaker, we have also adopted a widely acclaimed and landmark lobby and ethics reform bill. And it has been this Congress that has returned to financial sanity and fiscal responsibility by adhering to pay-as-you-go discipline, no new deficit spending.

So I am very pleased to debate the record of this Congress on the floor of the House. We will work in a bipartisan way to build consensus. More than two-thirds of this legislation has passed in a bipartisan manner. We will strive to find common ground where we can, like here on the Head Start bill. But where we cannot, we will stand our ground, like on the Iraq bill that we will bring later today.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, the record brought out today by the Roll Call editorial, that I am very pleased, by the way, that our ranking member brought forth and read into the RECORD, I think is important for a number of reasons.

Again, I was also here when the distinguished Speaker was elected in January. I recall the promises at that time and during the campaign, the electoral campaign that preceded that ceremony in January. The promises were, and I am sure they will be recalled, to have a more open process, a more transparent House. So the reason why I think it is most appropriate now to bring out the record that Roll Call in

an editorial has outlined is that instead of seeing, during this year, this first year of this Congress, a more open process, a more transparent process, a more democratic process, what we have seen is a more than doubling of the closed rules, of the gag rules, if you will, the gag rules that don't permit any amendments on legislation.

Since we are discussing the rule, by the way, on legislation that is an example of bipartisanship, the Head Start program is one that has been supported from its inception in a bipartisan manner, but we are discussing the rule, the means to debate this legislation, the procedure, if you will, to debate the legislation, I think it's appropriate to bring out the more than doubling by a majority that promised more transparency and more democracy in the running of the House, a more than doubling of gag rules that prohibit debate, that prohibit any amendments for debate. So I think that is appropriate to bring forth. And I commend Roll Call that, yes, was very critical when we were in the majority of many of the things that happened at that time. But a doubling, more than doubling of the impropriety, of the gag rules by a majority that promised more transparency is not only important to bring out but I think it is most unfortunate.

At this time, Madam Speaker, I would like to yield 3 minutes to a distinguished colleague who has worked so much on this legislation in an admirable way, as he has on many issues of great importance to the American people, Mr. CASTLE of Delaware.

Mr. CASTLE. I would like to thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding, and I apologize for returning to such a mundane subject as the rule before us, but that is what I am here to do.

I do rise in support of this rule, and I would like to thank Chairman MILLER along with Mr. McKEON and Mr. KILDEE, as well as their staffs, for the work they have done over the last several Congresses to strengthen and improve the Head Start program.

Since 1965, the Head Start program has given economically disadvantaged children access to the same educational, health, nutritional, social and other services that were enjoyed by their more affluent peers. The goal of the program was, as it remains today, to provide children a solid foundation that will prepare them for success in school and later in life. As the centerpiece of the Federal Government's efforts to support quality early childhood education for our Nation's most disadvantaged youth, Head Start has served nearly 20 million low-income children and their families. Currently, Head Start serves over 900,000 children every day and has over 1,600 grantees across the United States. In my home State of Delaware, Head Start programs serve over 2,000 children with over 800 additional 3- and 4-year-olds receiving assistance through State Government funding.

Although we can agree on the need for Head Start and its successes, we must also recognize that the Head Start program is capable of producing even greater results for our children. Students who attend Head Start programs do start school more prepared than those with similar backgrounds who do not attend Head Start. Head Start students continue, however, to enter kindergarten well below national norms in school readiness. By moving to close the school readiness gap, the bipartisan Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act will improve results for almost a million Head Start students across the Nation.

I believe strongly in the Head Start program, particularly because of how the program helps children later in their academic lives. Despite the positive reputation of Head Start overall, however, there have been reports which have unfortunately uncovered the fact that some individuals have taken advantage of the taxpayer dollars that fund the program to line their own pockets. Along with the expertise of the Government Accountability Office and through reforms made in this bill, changes will be made to avoid these issues in the future. I feel this is the right step to take for the benefit of the program, and I thank everyone for finding what I hope will be a resolution to the pockets of abuse.

As I said at the outset, Head Start is an important and very popular program. The importance of early childhood education and services cannot be overstated. I believe strongly that the reforms sought with this bill will go a long way to institute needed reforms to an already successful program.

I support passage of this rule and the conference report to H.R. 1429.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, at this time, I am pleased to continue the debate on this important rule, the bipartisan Head Start conference report, by recognizing for 1 minute a member of the Education and Labor Committee, my good friend and colleague from Iowa (Mr. LOEBSACK).

Mr. LOEBSACK. I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding.

I want to commend Chairman MILLER, Mr. McKEON, Mr. KILDEE and Mr. CASTLE on their impressive work on this truly bipartisan legislation. This conference report is proof positive that in spite of the rancor evident this morning, when we put our minds to it and work together, we can, in fact, get things done in this Congress.

Head Start offers comprehensive early childhood development services to our Nation's neediest children. These comprehensive services are key to the program's success. Head Start engages parents and the community in students' lives and provides important nutritional, health and social services.

Studies show that children who enroll in Head Start excel academically, they have fewer health problems, and adapt better both socially and emotionally. I am proud to say that over

9,600 children are enrolled in the program in Iowa.

I grew up in poverty, and I know firsthand how important programs like Head Start are to low-income families. I urge my colleagues to support this conference report and this rule, and I hope it will be quickly signed into law.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is my privilege at this time to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished ranking member of the Education Committee, Mr. McKEON of California.

Mr. McKEON. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I am pleased to rise in support of the rule on the conference report for the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act. This rule will allow the House to give final endorsement to a bill that will strengthen and improve the Head Start early childhood education program.

I would like to begin by recognizing members of the Education and Labor Committee for their efforts to produce this bipartisan conference report. Representatives CASTLE and KILDEE, along with Chairman MILLER and our staffs, have done great work to strengthen and improve this critical program.

In more than 50,000 Head Start classrooms around the Nation, nearly 1 million disadvantaged children are being given the tools and resources to help put them on a path to success which is a win-win for the country.

We have spent a great deal of time this year working to strengthen the No Child Left Behind Act. That law is, at its most basic level, about closing the achievement gap in our Nation's schools. However, the gaps between disadvantaged students and their peers do not begin in elementary school. That's why we have Head Start. This program is designed to help close the readiness gap in children before they ever enroll in school. The health, developmental and educational services offered through this program truly do give a head start to those children than they otherwise enter school already lagging behind.

□ 1115

Some studies have shown that children enrolled in Head Start do make progress, but there's significant work yet to be done in closing that readiness gap. I also believe it's critical to strengthen the financial controls in Head Start so that we can prevent the types of waste, fraud and abuse that have been uncovered over the past 5 years. Republicans acted aggressively to root out cases of financial abuse and mismanagement. We sought the expertise of the Government Accountability Office to identify weaknesses in the financial control network of the program. Through this bill, we will institute structural changes to prevent future breaches in the program's trust.

Our committee has been working to strengthen and reform this program going on 5 years, and I believe that dedication has paid off. Certainly this

bill is not perfect, but on issues where there were disagreements, I am pleased that we have forged compromises. Head Start is a good program, capable of achieving even greater results. With this bill, I believe we can make that happen.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of this rule, and I look forward to House passage of this conference report so it can go to the President for his signature.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, I am the last speaker for our side, so I will reserve the balance of my time until the gentleman from Florida has made his closing remarks.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I will be asking for a "no" vote on the previous question so that we can amend this rule and move toward passing a conference report on the bipartisan Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations act. The House passed this veterans affairs and military funding bill on June 15 by a vote of 409-2, with the Senate following suit and naming conferees on September 6. Unfortunately, the majority leadership in the House has refused to move the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations bill. They have even refused to name conferees.

Why has the majority decided to hold off on moving this bill that has such bipartisan support? Well, according to several publications, including Roll Call, the majority intends to hold off sending appropriations bills to President Bush so that they can use an upcoming anticipated veto, actually, the veto of the Labor-HHS appropriations bill, to serve as "an extension of their successful public relations campaign on the SCHIP program." Fortunately, that purely political move failed last week when the Senate removed the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations bill from the Labor-HHS bill.

Recently the Republican leader, Mr. BOEHNER, took a step toward naming House Republican conferees. Now the Speaker must follow suit and take the steps necessary to ensure that work can begin on writing the final veterans funding bill that can be enacted into law.

Madam Speaker, every day that the majority chooses not to act on this bill, our Nation's veterans lose \$18.5 million. Our veterans deserve better than that; they deserve better than partisan gamesmanship holding back their funding. I urge my colleagues to help move this important legislation and oppose the previous question.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment and extraneous materials immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, by passing the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 and this rule, we will build on the great success of Head Start for America's hardworking families. I would like to salute the chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, GEORGE MILLER; subcommittee Chair, DALE KILDEE; the ranking member, Mr. MCKEON; and Congressman CASTLE from the committee, and all the committee members from Education and Labor for their wonderful work on this Head Start bill.

I would also like to thank the parents across America who are struggling to provide all that they can for their children. We are on their side. This Democratic Congress is charting a new direction with wise investments in education and health care for our kids, which are certain to pay dividends in the years to come.

Madam Speaker, this is an important day for America because Congress is going to keep the promise that it made four decades ago to children who are born with the same potential but, because of their life circumstances, are in need of a little extra attention, health care, nutrition and the guiding hand of a knowledgeable and talented teacher, which together provides them with a true "head start." I urge a "yes" vote on the previous question and on the rule.

The material previously referred to by Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 813 OFFERED BY MR. DIAZ-BALART OF FLORIDA

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 3. The House disagrees to the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 2642, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, and agrees to the conference requested by the Senate thereon. The Speaker shall appoint conferees immediately, but may declare a recess under clause 12(a) of rule I for the purpose of consulting the Minority Leader prior to such appointment. The motion to instruct conferees otherwise in order pending the appointment of conferees instead shall be in order only at a time designated by the Speaker in the legislative schedule within two additional legislative days after adoption of this resolution.

(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) describes 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. CASTOR. Madam 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 ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the

previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adoption of H. Res. 813, if ordered; motion to suspend the rules on H. Res. 812; motion to suspend the rules on H.R. 3320; motion to suspend the rules on H. Res. 811.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 224, nays 190, not voting 18, as follows:

(Roll No. 1086)

YEAS—224

Abercrombie	Grijalva	Obey
Ackerman	Gutierrez	Olver
Allen	Hall (NY)	Ortiz
Altmire	Hare	Pallone
Andrews	Harman	Pascarell
Arcuri	Hastings (FL)	Pastor
Baca	Herseth Sandlin	Payne
Baird	Higgins	Perlmutter
Baldwin	Hill	Peterson (MN)
Bean	Hinchee	Pomeroy
Becerra	Hinojosa	Price (NC)
Berkley	Hirono	Rahall
Berman	Hodes	Rangel
Berry	Holden	Reyes
Bishop (GA)	Holt	Richardson
Bishop (NY)	Honda	Rodriguez
Blumenauer	Hooley	Ross
Boren	Hoyer	Rothman
Boswell	Inslee	Roybal-Allard
Boucher	Israel	Ruppersberger
Boyd (FL)	Jackson (IL)	Rush
Boyd (KS)	Jackson-Lee	Ryan (OH)
Brady (PA)	(TX)	Salazar
Braley (IA)	Johnson (GA)	Sánchez, Linda T.
Brown, Corrine	Johnson, E. B.	Sanchez, Loretta
Butterfield	Jones (OH)	Kagen
Capps	Kagen	Kanjorski
Capuano	Kanjorski	Kaptur
Cardoza	Kaptur	Kennedy
Carnahan	Kennedy	Kildee
Carney	Kildee	Kilpatrick
Castor	Kilpatrick	Kind
Chandler	Kind	Klein (FL)
Clarke	Klein (FL)	Kucinich
Clay	Kucinich	Lampson
Cleaver	Lampson	Langevin
Clyburn	Langevin	Lantos
Cohen	Lantos	Larson (CT)
Conyers	Larson (CT)	Lee
Cooper	Lee	Levin
Costa	Levin	Lewis (GA)
Costello	Lewis (GA)	Lipinski
Courtney	Lipinski	Loeb
Cramer	Loeb	Loftis
Crowley	Loftis	Loftis, Zoe
Cuellar	Loftis, Zoe	Lowey
Cummings	Lowey	Lynch
Davis (AL)	Lynch	Mahoney (FL)
Davis (CA)	Mahoney (FL)	Maloney (NY)
Davis (IL)	Maloney (NY)	Markey
Davis, Lincoln	Markey	Marshall
DeFazio	Marshall	Matheson
DeGette	Matheson	Matsui
Delahunt	Matsui	McCarthy (NY)
DeLauro	McCarthy (NY)	McCollum (MN)
Dicks	McCollum (MN)	McDermott
Dingell	McDermott	McGovern
Doggett	McGovern	McIntyre
Donnelly	McIntyre	McNerney
Edwards	McNerney	McNulty
Ellison	McNulty	Meek (FL)
Ellsworth	Meek (FL)	Meeks (NY)
Emanuel	Meeks (NY)	Melancon
Engel	Melancon	Michaud
Eshoo	Michaud	Miller (NC)
Etheridge	Miller (NC)	Miller, George
Farr	Miller, George	Mitchell
Fattah	Mitchell	Mollohan
Filner	Mollohan	Moore (KS)
Frank (MA)	Moore (KS)	Moran (VA)
Giffords	Moran (VA)	Murphy (CT)
Gillibrand	Murphy (CT)	Murphy, Patrick
Gonzalez	Murphy, Patrick	Murtha
Gordon	Murtha	Nadler
Green, Al	Nadler	Napolitano
Green, Gene	Napolitano	Neal (MA)

NAYS—190

Aderholt	Barrett (SC)	Billakis
Akin	Barrow	Bishop (UT)
Alexander	Bartlett (MD)	Blackburn
Bachmann	Barton (TX)	Blunt
Bachus	Biggart	Boehner
Baker	Bilbray	Bonner

Bono	Graves	Pickering
Boozman	Hall (TX)	Pitts
Boustany	Hastings (WA)	Platts
Brady (TX)	Heller	Poe
Broun (GA)	Hensarling	Porter
Brown (SC)	Herger	Price (GA)
Brown-Waite,	Hobson	Pyoe (OH)
Ginny	Hoekstra	Putnam
Buchanan	Hulshof	Radanovich
Burgess	Hunter	Ramstad
Burton (IN)	Inglis (SC)	Regula
Buyer	Issa	Rehberg
Calvert	Jindal	Reichert
Camp (MI)	Johnson, Sam	Renzi
Campbell (CA)	Jones (NC)	Reynolds
Cannon	Jordan	Rogers (AL)
Cantor	Keller	Rogers (KY)
Capito	King (IA)	Rogers (MI)
Carter	King (NY)	Rohrabacher
Castle	Kingston	Ros-Lehtinen
Chabot	Kirk	Roskam
Coble	Kline (MN)	Royce
Cole (OK)	Knollenberg	Ryan (WI)
Conaway	Kuhl (NY)	Sali
Crenshaw	LaHood	Saxton
Culberson	Lamborn	Schmidt
Davis (KY)	Latham	Sensenbrenner
Davis, David	LaTourette	Shadegg
Deal (GA)	Lewis (CA)	Shays
Dent	Lewis (KY)	Shimkus
Diaz-Balart, L.	Linder	Shuster
Diaz-Balart, M.	LoBiondo	Simpson
Doolittle	Lucas	Smith (NE)
Drake	Lungren, Daniel E.	Smith (NJ)
Dreier	E.	Smith (TX)
Duncan	Mack	Souder
Ehlers	Manzullo	Stearns
Emerson	McCarthy (CA)	Sullivan
English (PA)	McCaul (TX)	Tancredo
Everett	McCotter	Terry
Fallin	McCrery	Thornberry
Feeney	McHenry	Tiahrt
Ferguson	McHugh	Tiberi
Flake	McKeon	Turner
Forbes	Mica	Upton
Fortenberry	Miller (FL)	Walberg
Fossella	Miller (MI)	Walden (OR)
Fox	Miller, Gary	Walsh (NY)
Franks (AZ)	Moran (KS)	Wamp
Frelinghuysen	Murphy, Tim	Weldon (FL)
Gallely	Musgrave	Westmoreland
Gerlach	Myrick	Whitfield
Gilchrest	Neugebauer	Wicker
Gingrey	Nunes	Wilson (NM)
Gohmert	Pearce	Wilson (SC)
Goode	Pence	Wolf
Goodlatte	Peterson (PA)	Young (AK)
Granger	Petri	Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—18

Carson	Jefferson	Oberstar
Cubin	Johnson (IL)	Paul
Davis, Tom	Larsen (WA)	Sessions
Doyle	Marchant	Sestak
Garrett (NJ)	McMorris	Weller
Hastert	Rodgers	
Hayes	Moore (WI)	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised 3 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1145

Mr. PETRI changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SYMPATHY AND PLEDGING SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF FLOODING IN SOUTHERN MEXICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to

the resolution, H. Res. 812, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. HOYER was allowed to speak out of order.)

REGARDING TIME FOR VOTING

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I made this announcement some 10 days ago or a week ago, and we frankly didn't follow it very well, but I want to take another try.

On both sides of the aisle, you have correctly expressed concern about how long our votes are taking. There are times when votes take a longer time, we have Members down at the White House, we are just going to finish a committee markup, they are voting, or something like that. We understand that.

Madam Speaker, I would like everybody to hear this, because you are going to be angry with me. You are going to be angry with me today.

There were some 140 votes cast by the time the time ran out on this vote. That meant there were some 280 people who had not voted after 15 minutes. This vote took 25 minutes, give or take. Both sides of the aisle and the committee chairmen who are in a markup and it takes so long to get back to the markup, and we have witnesses standing there, both sides had this problem.

So I am asking you for your cooperation. Look at the clock, and when the clock hits 5 minutes left, come over here. Don't look at how many Members have not voted and think to yourself because there are so many Members that haven't voted, we're going to call the roll.

I want to say to my side, I am not going to, frankly, want to lose votes. You don't want to lose votes. They didn't want to lose votes when they were in charge. I didn't blame them. Either side. But don't take the position that they will wait for as long as they need to wait, because that is inconsiderate to every Member who comes here in a timely fashion and then has to wait because somebody else doesn't.

Now, I will tell you this: I am an offender. I am not pointing a finger. If I am pointing a finger at you, I'm pointing four fingers at me. I have in the last week, so I could get up here and pontificate, tried to make sure that I got here on time. But I haven't been getting here on time. I have done the same thing as you. That's why I know you do it. Look at that.

So I am asking all of us to try to work together so that when the bell is rung and the roll is called, you are here on time. We will keep these votes in the vicinity of 17 minutes, and some of you are going to miss votes.

Let me clarify so you understand. The Speaker's position articulated at the beginning of the session, if you are in the well with a card in your hand, you will be allowed to vote. But if somebody yells in the back of the room