

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY).

Ms. HOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, as a strong proponent of the American Heart Association's GO-Red campaign aimed at educating women about heart disease and stroke, I am proud to be a cosponsor of the Stroke Treatment and Ongoing Prevention Act.

This legislation will help reduce the 150,000 deaths that occur each year from stroke. Every 3 minutes someone dies of a stroke according to the American Heart Association. To a stroke victim, delay means more dead brain cells. The most common type of strokes kills 1.9 million brain cells every minute. One study estimated that for every 12 minutes a stroke victim delays treatment, a pea-sized portion of the brain dies.

Fortunately, educating people about when to seek treatment makes a difference. And I want to tell a story about a friend of mine. About 6 months ago, young woman, she happened to have another friend visiting her. And she woke up one morning and said, I don't feel very good. I can hardly lift my arm. And her friend that was visiting said, we are going straight to the hospital. She is doing very well in recovery, not only because she is a very determined person, but she can also thank her friend for recognizing what was happening and getting her to a hospital immediately.

By educating people about stroke symptoms and strengthening training programs for physicians, this legislation will save lives and limit the damage to stroke survivors.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 477.

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Stroke Treatment and Ongoing Prevention Act.

As the original cosponsor of the STOP Stroke Act, I would like to extend a special thanks to my colleague and the bill's sponsor, Congresswoman CAPPs for her tireless efforts to move this important legislation.

Despite significant advances in its diagnosis, treatment, and prevention, stroke remains the nation's number three killer and a leading cause of long-term disability. An estimated 700,000 U.S. residents have a new or recurrent stroke each year, and about 160,000 of them die, according to statistics compiled by the American Heart Association. On average, every 45 seconds, someone in the United States has a stroke, and someone dies of a stroke every 3 to 4 minutes. Stroke is the number four killer in my home state of Mississippi. In 2004, 1,651 people in Mississippi died of stroke. Mississippi ranks first in the nation for the highest death rate from heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases.

Today 5.7 million Americans are stroke survivors. As many as 30 percent of them are permanently disabled, requiring extensive and costly care. It is expected that stroke will cost the nation \$62.7 billion in 2007.

Prompt treatment of patients experiencing stroke can save lives and reduce disability, yet thousands of stroke patients do not receive

the care they need. Additionally, most Americans cannot identify the signs of stroke, and even emergency medical technicians are often not taught how to recognize and manage its symptoms. Even in hospitals, stroke patients often do not receive the care that could save their lives. Rapid administration of clot-dissolving drugs dramatically improves the outcome of stroke, yet fewer than 3 percent of stroke patients now receive such medication.

The STOP Stroke Act is a first step toward removing these barriers to quality stroke care, thereby saving lives and reducing disability. The legislation addresses a number of significant hindrances to quality stroke care including low public awareness, lack of necessary infrastructure, low awareness among medical professionals, and lack of adequate data collection.

The legislation will coordinate these various components. According to the American Heart Association, developing coordinated systems of care is essential to improving prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation for stroke patients.

The STOP Stroke Act authorizes a national public information campaign to educate the public about stroke, including how to reduce risk, recognize the warning signs, and seek emergency treatment as soon as symptoms occur.

This legislation also authorizes the Paul Coverdell Stroke Registry and Clearinghouse to collect data about the care of acute stroke patients and foster the development of effective stroke care systems. The clearinghouse will serve as a resource for States seeking to design and implement their own stroke care systems by collecting, analyzing and disseminating information on the efforts of other communities to establish similar systems.

The STOP Stroke Act also provides grants for public and non-profit entities to develop and implement continuing education programs in the use of new diagnostic approaches, technologies, and therapies for the prevention and treatment of stroke. Stroke support can be delivered to smaller, underserved facilities by relying more heavily on innovative telemedicine approaches that overcome the boundaries of time and distance to help rural hospitals tap into otherwise unattainable resources.

Finally, this bill authorizes a telehealth stroke treatment pilot project to support states' efforts to develop comprehensive networks to improve stroke prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation. These grants will allow states to identify stroke centers, improve communication networks that bring stroke care to rural areas, and decrease response time.

The time has come for a bill such as the STOP Stroke Act. In fact, the time is past due. We are in a situation where stroke rates are on the rise, and we must address the issues that are going to help us match resources with the growing need to prevent and treat this devastating illness.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in both Chambers to promptly move this legislation that has actually passed previously in both the House and the Senate.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I would yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr.

PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 477, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### HAWAIIAN HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2007

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 269, I call up the bill (H.R. 835) to reauthorize the programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development for housing assistance for Native Hawaiians, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 835

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Hawaiian Homeownership Opportunity Act of 2007".

#### SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE.

Section 824 of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4243), as added by section 513 of Public Law 106-569 (114 Stat. 2969), is amended by striking "fiscal years" and all that follows and inserting the following: "fiscal years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.".

#### SEC. 3. LOAN GUARANTEES FOR NATIVE HAWAIIAN HOUSING.

Section 184A of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992 (12 U.S.C. 1715z-13b), as added by section 514 of Public Law 106-569 (114 Stat. 2989), is amended as follows:

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In subsection (j)(7), by striking "fiscal years" and all that follows and inserting the following: "fiscal years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.".

(2) AUTHORITY.—In subsection (b), by striking "or as a result of a lack of access to private financial markets".

(3) ELIGIBLE HOUSING.—In subsection (c), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following new paragraph:

"(2) ELIGIBLE HOUSING.—The loan will be used to construct, acquire, refinance, or rehabilitate 1- to 4-family dwellings that are standard housing and are located on Hawaiian Home Lands."

#### SEC. 4. ELIGIBILITY OF DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS FOR TITLE VI LOAN GUARANTEES.

Title VI of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4191 et seq.) is amended as follows:

(1) HEADING.—In the heading for the title, by inserting "AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN" after "TRIBAL".

(2) AUTHORITY AND REQUIREMENTS.—In section 601 (25 U.S.C. 4191)—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by inserting "or by the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands," after "tribal approval,"; and

(ii) by inserting "or 810, as applicable," after "section 202"; and

(B) in subsection (c), by inserting "or VIII, as applicable" before the period at the end.

(3) SECURITY AND REPAYMENT.—In section 602 (25 U.S.C. 4192)—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “or housing entity” and inserting “, housing entity, or Department of Hawaiian Home Lands”; and

(ii) in paragraph (3)—

(I) by inserting “or Department” after “tribe”;

(II) by inserting “or VIII, as applicable,” after “title I”; and

(III) by inserting “or 811(b), as applicable” before the semicolon; and

(B) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “or housing entity” and inserting “, housing entity, or the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands”.

(4) PAYMENT OF INTEREST.—In the first sentence of section 603 (25 U.S.C. 4193), by striking “or housing entity” and inserting “, housing entity, or the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands”.

(5) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR CREDIT SUBSIDY.—In section 605(b) (25 U.S.C. 4195(b)), by striking “1997 through 2007” and inserting “2008 through 2012”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 269, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Hawaii.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material thereon.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to H.R. 835, I would first like to thank very much Chairman BARNEY FRANK and Ranking Member SPENCER BACHUS for their consideration of H.R. 835.

It is imperative, from the point of view of Representative HIRONO and myself, that we regard this bill as non-partisan in nature. And it was considered that way in committee, and I am grateful for it.

The bill was passed overwhelmingly last week 262–162. It was under the Suspension Calendar and did not receive a sufficient number of votes for the two-thirds required margin, so we find the bill before us this evening.

Of those 162 Republicans who voted “no” last week, 39 of them cosponsored the bill to create the Native Hawaiian Housing Title in the 106th Congress, including our good friend, Mr. BACHUS, and minority leader JOHN BOEHNER.

This reauthorization and improvements were requested by Hawaii’s Republican Governor, Linda Lingle. The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands is chaired by the former head of the State’s Republican Party.

This bill was introduced last year by Congressman Ney and was reported out of the Financial Services Committee by voice vote without amendment. And last year’s Republican chairman of the

Financial Services Committee, Mike Oxley, was also a cosponsor of the bill.

I bring these things up, Mr. Speaker, to emphasize that never have we ever considered this bill to be a partisan bill, a Republican or Democratic bill. This is a bill that affects constituents, regardless of their political affiliation, and is not ideological in nature. It is really administrative in nature.

There have been some discussions and some arguments concerning some of the constitutional issues that have been raised in other contexts about native people. This is not the venue to have that kind of a discussion or argument. We do not want to harm those who come before us for legislative redress and expect to have it and not expect to have an argument in which they will become grist for an ideological mill, grist for a disputation of an academic nature or of a philosophical nature, having nothing to do with the question at hand, in this instance, most particularly dealing with homeownership, mortgages, and refinancing.

I understand, and will defer to Mr. BACHUS on this point, that Mr. RENZI has made a statement of support in addition, and I expect to hear about that when we yield to Mr. BACHUS for his participation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize again that this is not a partisan bill. It is not really anything that should be considered other than on the merits of the subject matter at hand.

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

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

And the first thing I would like to acknowledge is both my respect and friendship with my colleague from Hawaii, Mr. ABERCROMBIE. I have enjoyed a long friendship with him, have the utmost respect for him, and I associate myself with the remarks he made. I believe his remarks were fair and accurate. Not to parrot the Fox News network, but also fair and accurate.

He has, I think, correctly pointed out, colleagues on my side of the aisle, some are supportive of this legislation. Others have concerns about the legislation. And it is for that reason that we have asked for time on the floor just to express some of those concerns.

At the same time, as the gentleman from Hawaii has said, we have some Members that strongly support this legislation. He mentioned the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. RENZI), also the gentleman, DON YOUNG, from Alaska, is a strong supporter of this legislation. And a number of my colleagues also voted for the legislation.

Others of my colleagues are concerned about some of the statements made in the *Rice v. Cayetano* case, that some of these benefits, and there are some 160 benefits that go to Native Hawaiians. And some of these benefits actually date back to statehood and, I think, the founding of the State of Hawaii. So there is some historical basis for these.

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But, as I have said, some of my colleagues are concerned about that.

Some of them have pointed out the words of Justice Kennedy in that decision where he said this: “America is a melting pot of cultures from around the world.” And he said, “As the State of Hawaii attempts to address these realities, it must, as always, seek the political consensus that begins with a shared purpose. One of the necessary beginning points is this principle: The Constitution of the United States too has become the heritage of all the citizens of Hawaii.”

And that Constitution, as we know, in almost all cases is opposed to racial set-asides. So this disturbs many of my colleagues on my side of the aisle.

At the same time, as I said, there is some historical context for these, and I think probably utmost is that I think most people in Hawaii, several Republicans, officeholders as well as both members of the present Hawaii delegation, support these programs and believe they greatly have benefited the people of Hawaii.

Let me simply close by saying we had hoped to come united together in supporting this legislation. Mr. CAMPBELL in committee had offered an amendment, and in closing I will read that amendment. Had this amendment been accepted, we would have been prepared, I think, to almost unanimously to have supported this bill.

Mr. CAMPBELL’s amendment said: “Nothing in this title shall be construed to confer a constitutionally special political or legal relationship based on Native Hawaiian race or ancestry between the United States and the Native Hawaiian people for purposes of establishing a government-to-government relationship.”

With that, Mr. Speaker, as I said, with great respect for Congressman ABERCROMBIE and also Congresswoman HIRONO, I appreciate the civility and the spirit of cooperation in which we come here tonight.

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

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

Briefly, Mr. Speaker, I am also very grateful to Mr. BACHUS for his commentary and his observations and will indicate that, at least as far as this Member is concerned, there will be time enough, I believe, tomorrow to deal with the question should there be a recommittal offered on the issues that were raised by either the Campbell amendment or any of the other points that were raised as a basis or foundation for possible opposition to the bill. I believe they can be answered.

I believe that this is fundamentally a very conservative approach that merits the support of Members across the various ideological spectrums that exist here in the House of Representatives; and I hope, with the opportunity to speak about them at some length, perhaps tomorrow, that we will be able to

satisfy one and all here on the floor that this is a bill worthy of support.

The principal thing I would say, just simply in quick response, is that the Rice versus Cayetano decision which was mentioned does not affect these programs, has literally nothing to do with the issue at hand in this H.R. 835. The decision invalidated an election system for a State agency, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, a State agency. The decision did not affect the agency itself. It did not even question the validity of the agency. It had to do with the question of who could vote for the trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs still exists today. It exists for the benefit of Native Hawaiians and is voted on by the entire voting population of the State of Hawaii. So it had to do with an election issue and absolutely nothing to do with this, and the Court declined to address the question of Native Hawaiian programs authorized by Congress. So we are dealing with an entirely separate set of issues here, and I hope to make that clear tomorrow.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to Representative HIRONO.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman and my colleague for yielding time.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 835, the Hawaiian Homeownership Opportunity Act of 2007 and ask for my colleagues' support of the bill.

The Act assists the State of Hawaii's Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, DHHL, to provide opportunities for homeownership for low-income native Hawaiians. The bill in no way addresses the question of whether or not Native Hawaiians should be recognized as a sovereign entity akin to Alaska Natives or American Indians.

During debate on this bill last Wednesday, no Member came to the floor to speak in opposition to the bill. In fact, the gentleman from Arizona, who managed the time, expressed support for the bill.

Unfortunately, either during the debate or afterward, e-mails were sent to Members containing at least two erroneous assertions: first, that this bill is unconstitutional and, second, that this bill "would confer on Native Hawaiians an arrangement like that between the Federal Government and American Indian tribes." Opponents then compounded the error by citing the Rice v. Cayetano voting rights Supreme Court decision in support of their broad assertions.

As to the first assertion, the constitutionality of any measure must be decided by the courts; and, clearly, the courts have not opined on the constitutionality of this bill. As to the second assertion, there is nothing in the bill that speaks to creating a political relationship between Native Hawaiians and the Federal Government akin to the relationship between the Federal Government and American Indian tribes.

This bill, which promotes homeownership, a goal that all of us can support in bipartisan fashion, has been targeted for defeat by opponents who are misreading the bill as well as case law.

I was a member of the Cayetano administration in Hawaii and sat in the Supreme Court when arguments in the Rice case were heard. It may interest some of you to know that one of the lawyers arguing the State of Hawaii's case was John Roberts, who is now Chief Justice of our Supreme Court.

The central issue in the Rice v. Cayetano case was the narrow question of whether the State of Hawaii could hold an election for trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs where only Native Hawaiians could vote. In holding that the State could not so limit these elections, the majority opinion of the Court deliberately avoided the question of whether or not Native Hawaiians deserved the same right of self-determination granted to American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Nothing in the Rice decision holds that programs that benefit Native Hawaiians are unconstitutional. The majority court decision did not call into question the trust relationship between the U.S. Government and the Native Hawaiian people. It did not strike down the Office of Hawaiian Affairs or any other program benefiting Native Hawaiians as unconstitutional.

While the entire Hawaii congressional delegation, Hawaii's Governor, who happens to be a Republican, and the Hawaii legislature supports self-determination for Native Hawaiians, that is not the subject of the bill before us today. My colleague and I have introduced H.R. 505, the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act of 2007, also known as the Akaka bill. We can discuss the merits of self-determination for Native Hawaiians when and if the Congress considers that bill.

The bill before us today provides assistance to a limited group of Native Hawaiians, those designated as beneficiaries under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1921. That bill, in recognition of the desperate poverty and displacement from the land of Native Hawaiians, established a homesteading program to place eligible Native Hawaiians, or those with at least 50 percent Hawaiian blood, on lands in Hawaii designated for that purpose. The law was passed at the urging of the Territory of Hawaii's delegate to Congress, Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole. Some 200,000 acres were set aside for the purpose of providing Native Hawaiians with land. This 1921 Act of Congress has never been challenged in the Supreme Court in the last 86 years.

Despite the good intentions of the Congress, progress in meeting the goal of delivering land to Native Hawaiians was slow. Most of the Hawaiian homelands were located in areas far from jobs, and infrastructure like roads and utilities were nonexistent. Many indi-

viduals were on the waiting list for more than 30 years. The Hawaiian Homelands Homeownership Act of 2000 has provided the Department of Hawaiian Homelands with much-needed resources to expand opportunities for homeownership among low-income Native Hawaiians. Especially critical has been the ability to use these funds to develop the infrastructure that makes placing homes on these properties possible.

Because the issue of Native Hawaiian rights as a native people lies at heart of the opposition to this bill, I would like to quote attorneys H. Christopher Bartolomucci, Viet Dinh, and Neal Katyal, who stated in a February, 2007, legal document prepared for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs:

"Congressional legislation dealing with indigenous groups is political, not racial, in character and therefore is neither discriminatory nor unconstitutional. Rice v. Cayetano specifically declined to address whether 'Native Hawaiians have a status like that of Indians in organized tribes' and 'whether Congress may treat Native Hawaiians as it does the Indian tribes'."

As previously mentioned, we can and should have the debate on whether or not Native Hawaiians should enjoy the rights to self-determination given to other Native American groups when that bill is squarely before us in H.R. 505. Native Hawaiians deserve no less.

This bill before us today simply provides Native Hawaiians who are eligible for homesteads under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act passed by Congress with the financing tools to allow them to realize for their families the dream of homeownership which otherwise would be available to very few of them.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill. Mahalo nui loa.

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

Let me say that I appreciate Congresswoman HIRONO's discussing the bill and the different components of the bill and also Congressman ABERCROMBIE. And let me say that I do acknowledge that low-income Native Hawaiians living on the Hawaiian homelands, that they are under some restraints in building homes and financing those homes; and, because of that, there is support on my side of the aisle for some of these programs, and there are some differences of opinion. So I do acknowledge that for them, because it is on Native Hawaiian lands, it is almost impossible for them to get private financing; and that is at least the basis for some of these programs. And I do believe and I am hopeful that some of the discussions we have heard tonight will enlighten Members on both sides. It is not the intent of the minority to obstruct the passage of this legislation.

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

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I am again very appreciative of Mr.

BACHUS for his perception, his perspective, and his judgment with regard to the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time except for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve 5 minutes of my time, and I yield back the balance of my time, also.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2 of House Resolution 269, further proceedings on the bill will be postponed.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1132, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### GRASSROOTS LOBBYING AND FREEDOM OF SPEECH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, as part of the Constitutional Caucus, we try every week to raise issues that are of concern to us, because dealing with the Constitution, observing the Constitution and honoring the Constitution is very, very important to us. It is the basis of everything that we do here in the Congress and should be the basis of every lawmaking body in our country. So tonight I want to talk a little bit about the first amendment and a concern that I have about an assault that has been made on the first amendment by a previous Congress.

The first amendment clearly states that "Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech." Our Founding Fathers understood the vital role that free speech played in the health and functioning of our democracy. They lived under the restrictions

of colonial England, and were very intent on creating a new system of government that respected the right to speech and political expression.

One of the strongest proponents of the Constitution's Bill of Rights, Patrick Henry, said: "Guard with jealous attention the public liberty. Suspect everyone who approaches that jewel."

Today, as Mr. Henry advised 200 years ago, I look with suspicion at some of the legislation that has emerged from this body. I am suspicious that we have at times not given adequate attention to the "public liberty" that Patrick Henry so strongly urged us to guard.

Congress must take great care when attempting to control political expression. But, unfortunately, this has not always been the case. In the past, Congress has created laws which restrict organizations' rights to participate in the electoral process.

The First Amendment Restoration Act, H.R. 71, would restore America's first amendment rights by repealing the "electioneering communication" provision in the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, known as BCRA.

This provision stifles the speech rights of corporations, nonprofits and labor unions. They are prohibited from sponsoring no-PAC funded radio and TV advertisements that include any references to Federal candidates during the 30 days before primary elections and 60 days before general elections. This is a severe infringement on these organizations' constitutional rights to free speech. It communicates to them that they have no right to voice their views during elections.

It is a clear violation of the first amendment to restrict the speech of organizations and limit what people can say about a candidate and when they may say it. The Supreme Court, unfortunately, upheld the constitutionality of these restrictions on groups in the days leading up to an election. But the Supreme Court has erred in the past.

This bill offers a much-needed correction to the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act. The 30/60 day BCRA provision was an attack on the primary purpose of the first amendment's free speech clause, which is the protection of political speech. This bill fully restores those rights which were hampered by BCRA.

We must be vigilant and heed the words of America's founders. They knew firsthand the democracy-choking effect of restrictions placed on political speech. But the minute we begin to craft laws that hamper expression, we demonstrate we have forgotten the priceless lessons of liberty that have been fought for by the patriots who have gone before us.

I urge my colleagues to support the First Amendment Restoration Act, H.R. 71.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Special Order tonight.

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

There was no objection.

#### NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORKER MONTH AND WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a former social worker serving in the United States Congress, and I rise to honor the work of professional social workers across the country and throughout the world.

I would like to join my colleagues in the National Association of Social Workers in recognizing March as National Professional Social Work Month and today as World Social Work Day. Today we have the opportunity to acknowledge the important contributions that social workers make in our community and throughout this country.

Today the House overwhelmingly passed H. Res. 266 to recognize the goals and ideals of National Professional Social Work Month and World Social Work Day. This legislation offered the Congress a valuable occasion to support professionals who have helped individuals, families, and communities resolve complicated issues and make significant choices.

My experience as a social worker had a profound influence on my decision to enter public life. I could see that many of the challenges facing my clients and those that I worked with had stemmed from the decisions being made at the public policy level. Serving in Congress allows me to be able to continue to help my clients in a broader capacity.

Social work as a profession is a commitment to not only addressing the individual needs of clients, but also in creating a just system. As a Member of Congress, I work every day to create a just system for the American people.

This year, the theme of National Professional Social Work Month is "Hope and Health." This theme allows us to highlight the considerable involvement of social workers in the health profession.

Social workers often work cooperatively with doctors, nurses and other medical professionals to ensure that their clients receive the highest quality care. Care and attention provided by social workers begins when the client enters the health care profession and does not end until he or she has recovered.

When dealing with health care, social workers will most often act as counselors and therapists. In that capacity, they must help the client and his or her family understand the diagnosis, the illnesses, and the emotions involved. In addition, social workers provide much-needed advice and support