

The death of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., will never overshadow his life. That is his legacy as a dreamer and a man of action. It is a legacy of hope, tempered with peace. It is a legacy not quite yet fulfilled.

I hope that Dr. King's vision of equality under the law is never lost to us, who in the present, toil in times of unevenness in our equality. For without that vision—without that dream—we can never continue to improve on the human condition.

For those who have already forgotten, or whose vision is already clouded with the fog of complacency, I would like to recite the words of the good Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., himself:

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former shareholders will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the State of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but for the content of their character. I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day down in Alabama with its vicious racists, with its Governor having his lips dripping with words of interposition and nullification—one day right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough place will be made plain and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

Dr. King's dream did not stop at racial equality, his ultimate dream was one of human equality. There is no doubt that Dr. King supported freedom and justice for every individual in America. We continue that fight today and forever, in the great spirit that inspired the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Madam Speaker, I thank all my colleagues for being here and remembering Dr. King's dream and for all that has been done to keep his dream alive.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 61.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those voting have responded in the affirmative.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PROVIDING NEW EFFECTIVE DATE FOR APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF LAW

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 188) to provide a new effective date for the applicability of certain provisions of law to Public Law 105-331.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 188

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, for the purposes of Public Law 105-331, the end of the 2-year period specified in subparagraph (B) of section 5134(f)(1) of title 31, United States Code, shall be July 1, 2007. This section shall apply on and after December 31, 2006, as if the section had been enacted on such date.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam 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 Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I urge today that the House pass H.R. 188, which was introduced by the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey, Representative PALLONE.

This bill has the simple purpose of addressing a glitch in the distribution of surcharges on the sale of commemorative coins that honor America's great inventor, Thomas Edison.

In 1988, legislation authorizing the production of the coin was enacted and the U.S. Mint minted and issued the coin in 2004. But as a result of some unclear language in the documents provided both the Mint and to recipient organizations, it was unclear that the matching funds required by law in the order for recipient organizations to receive the coin's proceeds must be raised entirely from private sources and that no other government funds could be used for this purpose.

This bill extends for a period of 6 months the amount of time in which the recipients of surcharges on the sales of the Thomas Edison commemorative coin are allowed to raise matching funds.

While the House passed the bill to remedy this problem by voice vote under suspension of rules last November, the Senate failed to act on this in a timely manner, so I would urge the House to consider the bill and immediately adopt the underlying text.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 188, introduced by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE). This bill will provide a new effective date for certain provisions in Public Law 105-331. It is a simple bill and it is simple to describe.

Passage will allow the Edison Tower Museum in Edison, New Jersey, an extension until the end of June to raise private funds. These funds will match the roughly \$380,000 in surcharges due from the sale of coins as part of the Thomas Alva Edison Commemorative Coin Act of 2004.

As a result of some miscommunications and, frankly, a lack of clarity in materials, the United States Mint provided the Edison Memorial Tower Corporation regarding statutory requirements, this brief extension is necessary. It will allow the corporation time to raise private sector matching funds and thus claim the surcharges from the sale of the coins.

The situation is now cleared up and the Mint has corrected the documentation and all concerned agree that a brief extension of the statutory 2-year timeline is both reasonable and a practical and fair way to deal with the situation.

The matching fund requirements were part of sensible reforms to the commemorative coin program enacted in the 104th Congress at the behest of the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE). They are an important safeguard against misuse of the commemorative coin program. This modest extension creates no precedent for future surcharge recipients who fail to raise the required funds in a timely fashion, and is merely a brief pause to allow satisfaction of the statute.

This is a good bill, one that passed the House in November of 2006 by voice vote but was not acted upon by the other body. I urge its immediate passage.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), someone who is truly a leader in this Congress and the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Georgia for those very kind words.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this bill, which already passed the House by voice vote last November and was well on its way to becoming law until it was held up in the other body.

I have reintroduced the bill with Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, who is, of course, the chairman of the Financial Services Committee, and my colleague from New Jersey (Mr. SIREN) who is also here to speak on the bill, and also Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. It is a very simple

bill, designed to provide the Edison Memorial Tower Corporation additional time to raise funds to match a Federal grant.

The Edison Memorial Tower is a 131-foot tower built in 1937 on the exact spot where Thomas Edison's original Menlo Park laboratory was located in New Jersey. It was built to commemorate Edison's work and is connected to a museum displaying many of the inventor's creations.

Unfortunately, the tower has suffered more than \$3 million worth of water damage. The Edison Memorial Tower Corporation, which oversees the tower, was designated as a recipient of Federal funds under the Thomas Alva Edison Commemorative Coin Act, which we passed in 1998.

That funding became available at the beginning of last year but required a non-Federal match. After reading a document published by the Mint, the Tower Corporation originally thought that they could use State funds to pay for the match. Unfortunately, they were informed recently by the U.S. Mint that they could only use funds raised from private sources.

Once they realized this, the Tower Corporation approached me for help since they were faced with the need to raise more than \$300,000 by the end of 2006 to reach the statutory deadline for applying for the Federal funding. That is why I introduced the legislation to extend that deadline by 6 months, to give them adequate time to raise private funds.

I would point out that the board of the Tower Corporation has assured me and the Committee on Financial Services that they will be able to raise the necessary funds in 6 months and that they would not request another extension.

We all know that Thomas Edison's contributions to our society are too numerous to count, but by creating the modern light bulb at this location he is one of America's most recognized thinkers and inventors. The Memorial Tower helps celebrate his achievements and salutes the spirit of innovation that he fostered. We need to pass this to ensure that the Memorial Tower can be repaired and serve not only as a memorial to a great man, but also as a symbol of America's potential for technological innovation and achievement.

Lastly, Madam Speaker, I just would like to thank sincerely my colleagues, first of all Chairman FRANK, and, of course, Ranking Member BACHUS, for their willingness to move this bill, and the leadership on both sides of the aisle for putting it on the suspension calendar so early in this new Congress.

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I want to thank, again, first of all, Eric Gordon, my staff person sitting to my left, who worked so hard on this, and also the hard work of Jamie Lizarraga on the Democratic staff of the Financial Services Committee

which has been critical to moving the legislation. Joe Pinder of the Republican committee staff has also been quite helpful, and I thank him as well.

I thank my two colleagues, both the gentleman from Georgia and my Republican colleague, for the statements they made today.

This bill will go a long way towards ensuring that we can preserve an important landmark saluting a great American, and I ask my colleagues for their support.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield 1 minute to one of our distinguished newer Members from New Jersey (Mr. SIREs).

Mr. SIREs. Madam Speaker, I want to first thank senior Congressman PALLONE for allowing me to be part of this bill.

Madam Speaker, this bill gives the Edison Memorial Tower Corporation an extension to raise private matching funds. This would allow the corporation to receive Federal funding from the minting of the Thomas Alva Edison Commemorative Coin.

The corporation is a group of local residents from Edison, New Jersey, who oversee and manage the Edison Memorial Tower. The tower, built as a memorial to Thomas Edison in 1937, has suffered damage over the years and is in need of about 3 to \$4 million worth of repairs.

A misunderstanding between the mint and the corporation left the corporation short of matching funds. This bill simply extends the amount of time the corporation has to raise nongovernmental funds from December 31, 2006, to July 1, 2007. It rectifies a misunderstanding between the mint and a group of concerned citizens in my home State of New Jersey.

I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 188 and thank you very much for the time.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to also extend my deep courtesies to Mrs. BIGGERT. It is always a pleasure to be on the floor with her, and I appreciate her kindness and consideration and the work she has put into this bill and the Republicans on the other side.

Madam Speaker, Thomas Edison is truly an American hero, and this bill will go a long way to helping to fix just a minor problem and give just a little bit more time for the people to do a fitting commemorative to him.

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

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his kind words.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 188, which extends the effective date for the applicability of certain provisions of law to Public Law 105-331 to July 1, 2007. Public Law 105-331 revises the nonfederal matching re-

quirements conditioning payment to a designated recipient organization of certain proceeds from any surcharges on the sale of Thomas Alva Edison Commemorative Coins.

H.R.188 will establish July 1, 2007, as the end of the 2-year period after which there must be deposited in the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts any amounts deriving from such surcharge proceeds which have not been paid to a designated recipient organization solely because of the organization's failure to submit an audited financial statement demonstrating that all matching requirements have been met.

This extension will allow many organizations to receive the funds provided to them under the bill, and thus carry out the original intent of this body to celebrate the legacy of Thomas A. Edison, one of this country's greatest inventors.

The 2004 Thomas Alva Edison Commemorative Coin Act, Public Law 105-331, authorizes the production of up to 500,000 silver dollar coins. This coin commemorates the 125th anniversary of Thomas Edison's invention of the light bulb.

Thomas Edison made immeasurable contributions to this country. His inventions include the invention of a complete system of electric light and power and the launching of the modern electric utility industry. The Pearl Street station, which opened in lower Manhattan in September 1882, featured safe and reliable central power generation, efficient distribution, and a successful end use (i.e., the long-lasting incandescent light bulb and electric motors. In the 1890s, Edison began working on motion picture technology, and in the process created a third industry. Edison began commercial production of short movies in 1893, often filming in the famous "Black Maria," the first motion picture studio. Like the electric light and phonograph before it, Edison developed a complete system that encompassed everything needed to both film and show motion pictures.

We must continue to acknowledge and honor Thomas Edison for his irreplaceable contributions, many of which we cannot imagine living without. Some of the organizations that will receive funds to help honor the many great contributions of Thomas A. Edison include:

Museum of Arts and History—Up to one-eighth to the Museum of Arts and History, in the city of Port Huron, Michigan, for the endowment and construction of a special museum on the life of Thomas A. Edison in Port Huron;

Edison Birthplace Association—Up to one-eighth to the Edison Birthplace Association, Inc. in Milan, Ohio, to assist in the efforts of the association to raise an endowment as a permanent source of support for the repair and maintenance of the Thomas A. Edison birthplace, a national historic landmark;

National Park Service—Up to one-eighth to the National Park Service, for use in protecting, restoring and cataloguing historic documents and objects at the "Invention Factory" of Thomas A. Edison, in West Orange, New Jersey;

Edison Plaza Museum—Up to one-eighth to the Edison Plaza Museum in Beaumont, Texas, for expanding educational programs on Thomas A. Edison and for the repair and maintenance of the museum;

Edison Winter Home and Museum—Up to one-eighth to the Edison Winter Home and

Museum in Fort Myers, Florida, for historic preservation, restoration, and maintenance of the historic home and chemical laboratory of Thomas A. Edison;

Edison Institute—Up to one-eighth to the Edison Institute, otherwise known as “Greenfield Village” in Dearborn, Michigan, for use in maintaining and expanding displays and educational programs associated with Thomas A. Edison; and

Edison Memorial Tower—Up to one-eighth to the Edison Memorial Tower in Edison, New Jersey, for the preservation, restoration, and expansion of the tower and museum.

It is important that we allow these organizations that were selected to receive proceeds from the sale of the commemorative coins to receive the funds that will financially support their efforts to honor the legacy of Thomas A. Edison.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 188 to provide a new effective date for the applicability of certain provisions of law to Public Law 105–331.

Mr. BACHUS. Madam Speaker, I am happy to rise today in strong support of H.R. 188, legislation “to provide a new effective date for certain provisions of law in Public Law 105–331,” introduced by the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. PALLONE.

Enacted in 1998, Public Law 105–331 provided for the issuance in 2004 of the Thomas Alva Edison Commemorative Coin, commemorating the 125th anniversary of Edison’s invention of the light bulb.

In the years between the passage of that legislation and now, leadership of the group that operates the Edison Memorial Tower in Edison, New Jersey made plans to comply with statutory requirements to raise funds to match one-eighth of the surcharges raised from the sales of the coins—about \$380,000—and thus claim the surcharge funds. Unfortunately, through a series of miscommunications, it was not made clear to the board that these must be non-governmental funds.

When the error was discovered, the group moved quickly, seeking an extension of the 2-year time limit to raise those funds. Madam Speaker, on November 16 of last year, the House passed legislation similar to that which we are considering today that would have permitted an extension until the end of June. Unfortunately, during the wrap-up of the 109th Congress, the other body did not consider the legislation. However, I am confident that when the House sends this version of the bill to the Senate, it will quickly pass.

It is for these reasons, and because the invention of the light bulb is as good a thing to commemorate as I can imagine, that I urge immediate passage of this legislation.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 188.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORITY TO CONTINUE TO INSURE HOME EQUITY CONVERSION MORTGAGES

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 391) to authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to continue to insure, and to enter into commitments to insure, home equity conversion mortgages under section 255 of the National Housing Act.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 391

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

SECTION 1. AUTHORITY TO INSURE HOME EQUITY CONVERSION MORTGAGES.

The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development may, until the date specified in section 106(3) of the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007 (Division B of Public Law 109–289; 120 Stat. 1313), insure and enter into commitments to insure mortgages under section 255 of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1715z–20), without regard to the limitation in the first sentence of such section 255(g), as amended by section 131 of the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007 (120 Stat. 1316).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may need.

First of all, H.R. 391 is a bill sponsored by my good friend and colleague from Utah (Mr. MATHESON). H.R. 391 would prevent any shutdown of the Federal Housing Administration, FHA, reverse mortgage program. This program is also known as the Home Equity Conversion Mortgage program, or the HECM program.

As we are all aware, the Federal Government is currently operating with temporary funding authority that expires on February 15, 2007. The FHA can insure no more than 275,000 FHA reverse mortgages cumulatively nationwide under this authority.

A reverse mortgage is a unique loan that enables senior homeowners to remain in their homes and remain financially independent by converting part of their home equity into income without having to sell their home, give up title, or take on a new monthly mortgage payment.

Reverse mortgage is an apt name because the payment stream is reversed. Instead of making monthly payments to the lender, as with a regular mortgage, the lender makes payments to the homeowner. Payments to the borrower come in the form of a lump sum, monthly payments, a line of credit, or a combination thereof. Thus, the funds can be adapted to the financial needs of the senior taking out that particular loan.

Mr. MATHESON’s bill is necessary because surging FHA reverse mortgage

loan volume could result in this current national volume cap of FHA reverse mortgage loans being reached before February 15.

The FHA HECM program is the oldest and most popular reverse mortgage product, accounting for 90 percent of the total market. It has been available since 1989 to homeowners aged 62 or older. HECM loans are insured by the Federal Government through the Federal Housing Administration at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD.

The HECM program was created to serve our seniors who are cash poor but equity rich. The majority of loan recipients are elderly widows. The funds from a reverse mortgage can be used for anything: daily living expenses; home repairs or modifications; health care expenses, including prescription drugs or in-home care; existing debts; and other needs. This is extraordinarily important and timely legislation for our seniors.

The HUD HECM program has proven to be a growing success, serving its mission, while actually making money for the Federal Government. Its rapid pace of growth created a near crisis in 2005 when the number of FHA reverse mortgage loans began to near a statutory volume cap on the number of reverse mortgages that FHA could insure, leaving the program on the edge of suspension.

However, emergency appropriations legislation for fiscal year 2005 raised the volume cap from 150,000 to 250,000. Last fall, in the face of a similar concern, the limit was increased a little further to 275,000. However, current projections show a very real risk that the cap will be met before February 15.

In 2006, the House passed a bill that included a provision eliminating the FHA reverse mortgage volume cap, but unfortunately, the Senate did not act on this bill. As a result, in the short term, the statutory cap needs to be kept above the actual number of loans, or HUD will be required under law to suspend the program. That is why we need this very important piece of legislation passed.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 391, legislation that would temporarily remove the cap on the number of home equity conversion mortgages that may be insured by the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s FHA program. I would like to thank my colleagues, Congressman JIM MATHESON, and Congresswoman GINNY BROWN-WAITE, for introducing this important bill.

This legislation is similar to H.R. 2892, the Reverse Mortgages to Help America’s Seniors Act, which was approved by the House by voice vote in the previous Congress.

Madam Speaker, this legislation would enable senior homeowners to