

fuel efficient cars, \$23 million for fuels technology, \$708 million for coal energy research.

This is an economic development bill. When we began to fund NASA, that created thousands and thousands and thousands of jobs in science and engineering. This bill will do the same thing. It will give Rose in Illinois and all of those other folks who have had stagnant wages an opportunity to go into a field that is growing with public research and private research. This is a jobs bill, this is an economic development bill for a lot of the regions who have suffered under the global economy.

I appreciate what the chairman has done, I appreciate what the ranking member from the great State of Ohio has done with this bill. This is a jobs bill and this is a national security bill. I urge its passage, and I urge that this amendment go down.

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise. The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas) having assumed the chair, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2641) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

REPORT ON H.R. 2771, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-198) on the bill (H.R. 2771) making appropriations for the legislative branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 481 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2641.

□ 1307

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2641) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending Sep-

tember 30, 2008, and for other purposes, with Mr. DAVIS of Alabama in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, pending was amendment No. 24 by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND).

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word, and I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I want to thank my friend from Texas for yielding.

I just wanted to make a few comments about my friend Mr. RYAN, who I listened to many nights, Mr. Chairman, while I was up in the chair where you're at. Many nights, I listened to the 30-something Group get up and rail and talk about all the wasteful spending and about how much money we were spending and about how we had gone into debt and about what the debt was. And I hear Mr. RYAN stand up and talk about economic development. I'm going to tell you the best bills this country has ever had for economic development was the Bush tax cuts. Those were the best economic bills we've had for economic development in this country. Look at where the Dow is today at 13,000-plus. I haven't been keeping up with it, I don't really have a lot of money in the market. But we have busted records continually, and it has been because of those economic growth tax cut bills that we have had and the economic policies of this White House.

And as my gentleman friend from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) said, we don't necessarily agree with the President's recommendation. We feel like that's probably more money than we need to spend. But at least it is a recommendation that we need to go back to from the proposal of what the Democratic leadership has proposed.

And you know, if you talk about striking any money from an agency's budget, I think you get their attention. The ranking member was telling me that when he was the chairman 2 years ago, he asked for the Corps to send 10 of their most important projects that need to be completed. He hasn't heard from them yet. And so we need to send a message to some of these agencies and say look, you are going to give us the information we want, you are going to be accountable, and you are going to be under some authority.

So, I think we need to send that message loud and clear. And although some of these cuts are mighty small, I think they will do a good job in getting some attention. I'm glad to see that the 30-something Group is now, and that the Blue Dogs, or whatever kind of dogs they are, that I listened to also, Mr. Chairman, when I was up there late at night, listened to them for hours at a time talk about wasteful spending, I hope that they will join me in an hour, in Special Orders, when we talk about the largest tax increase in the history

of this country and the runaway spending that we now have, even larger spending than it was when we were in charge. I hope they will join me in that hour and we can get up and talk about being good stewards of the taxpayers' dollars.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, this Republican minority is intensely interested in making sure that we do the right thing for the country, but it should be noted that these bills should not be about economic development, they should be about solving water problems that we have with the dollars that are generated by the taxpayer to solve problems with water, with flooding and with the various elements of ensuring we have clean and better water that is available.

This should not be an economic development spending bill. I disagree with the gentleman from Ohio, and it is my hope that this body will recognize this economic development spending bill for what it is, as opposed to a water resources bill. I am disappointed to hear that it's characterized that way. And that is why we support the gentleman from Georgia with his amendment.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I wish to engage Subcommittee Chairman Mr. VISCLOSKEY in a colloquy for purposes of underscoring the strategic role of petroleum coke gasification to reduce dependence on the foreign supply of energy, and illustrating the technological feasibility of petroleum coke gasification projects to sequester carbon.

Mr. Chairman, the Energy and Policy Act of 2005, Public Law 109-58, has a specific provision, section 415, 42 U.S.C. 15975, authorizing the Secretary of Energy to provide loan guarantees for at least five petroleum coke gasification projects. Petroleum coke gasification projects are also qualified under title 17, the Innovative Technology Loan Guarantee Program under 1703 (c) 2 and (c) 3 as an industrial gasification project and pet coke gasification project, respectively. This provision of the law recognizes the critical importance of these projects in promoting efficient management of energy sources within the United States.

Domestic gasification of "petcoke," as it is also called in the U.S. refining industry, will reduce foreign exports of this product. Reducing exports of petcoke will result in reduced emissions of hydrocarbons, carbon dioxide and other gases resulting from production, transportation and burning of fossil fuels associated with energy sources currently being used instead of petcoke. Globally, it would also result in lower emissions from petcoke since this product often is not being burned in clean processes when it is exported.

Technology exists today to sequester carbon dioxide byproduct from the petcoke gasification process, pressurize the gas, and inject it underground as a

petroleum recovery enhancement technique.

□ 1315

Carbon sequestration can be a viable and compatible technology with petcoke gasification where the geology, ongoing field production, and relative distance to the location of a reliable source of carbon dioxide gas co-exist.

Petcoke gasification and carbon sequestration technologies would be in use more widely in key regions in our country if market-entry costs were not so high.

Mr. Chairman, reducing the cost of capital to place petcoke gasification technology into service is the very objective Congress recognized and set out to implement in the Energy Policy Act of 2005. The Department of Energy has not allocated sufficient funds for loan guarantees to demonstrate commercial readiness of the petcoke gasification technology, which will reduce dependence on foreign sources of energy. Adding carbon sequestration will require further allocation of Federal funds to implement this important technology.

Mr. Chairman, I urge your consideration to expand the types of projects that receive funding under title XVII of the Energy and Water appropriations bill to include already authorized petcoke projects that will enhance U.S. energy independence. I also urge your support for appropriating sufficient resources for one to two petcoke gasification projects in the fiscal year 2008 funding bill for the Department of Energy and hope you can take this into consideration when negotiating in conference committee with the Senate.

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman will yield, I want to thank Mr. GREEN for bringing to the committee's attention and my attention the need for adequate funding of these invaluable technologies.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank my colleague, my good friend from Indiana and Chair of the subcommittee, for bringing up this important piece of legislation.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 2641. I am particularly pleased the committee has provided the Army Corps of Engineers with \$5.6 billion, which is \$713 million more than the President's request and \$246 million more than last year's appropriations. These funds will help strengthen our Nation's flood control programs and navigation infrastructure, which is particularly important to my district.

Along the Houston Ship Channel, we have requested \$35 million for operations and maintenance on the deepening and widening project. This continued O&M funding would be used to keep the channel at its authorized depth, which is critical to keeping the channel navigable for the tankers that bring in crude oil to our refineries. We also have submitted a request for the environmental mitigation required as a result of the deepening and widening project and would hope that the committee will give that request its full consideration in conference.

Our area relies heavily on Corps of Engineers' funding, since we're not only an en-

ergy-producing area but also a low-lying area in the middle of a flood plain. I am hopeful that a portion of the increased funding for the Army Corps of Engineers can be directed to Greens Bayou, Hunting Bayou and Halls Bayou, which were flooded during Tropical Storm Allison in 2001. These authorized projects are located in blue-collar residential areas in my district, where the threat of future flooding is all too real. We dodged Hurricane Rita in 2005, but we need to step up our flood control efforts on these projects to give our residents adequate protection when the next storm hits. I appreciate the committee's continued understanding of the pressing flood control needs in our area.

I am also hopeful funding can be provided for other meritorious projects in our district, including the University of Houston's Center for Clean Fuels and Power Generation, the Very High Differential Pressure Sub-sea Multiphase Pumping System, and the Texas Hydrogen Highway.

This bill also makes a significant investment in researching and developing alternative energy sources which will lead us away from our dependence on fossil fuels. The bill provides \$1.6 billion for research into solar energy, biomass and bio-refinery systems, technologies to reduce vehicle emissions, and technologies to make buildings more energy efficient. It also provides much needed resources for weatherization assistance grants which will weather-proof the homes of low-income disabled and elderly individuals.

An investment in new sources of energy is critical to meeting our future energy needs, but in the interim we must continue to improve on the conventional sources of energy we use today. That is why I am pleased this bill funds the demonstration of technology that captures carbon exhaust, and researches how to make fossil fuels more efficient and sustainable.

These investments in both conventional and renewable energy research will help meet America's future energy needs and diversify our energy portfolio. The University of Houston's Center for Clean Fuels and Power Generation is contributing to this effort, and I have requested funding for the center's expansion. The center's work to conduct cross-disciplinary research and develop technology to spur the discovery and commercialization of new fuels to provide the Nation's transportation and construction sectors with low-cost, reliable and sustainable power sources. I hope the committee will work with us to include funding for this important project in conference.

I commend the Chairman, and also my good friend from Texas, Congressman CHET EDWARDS, for their hard work on this legislation, and urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Westmoreland amendment. I would like to point out that the President's budget request came in at \$1.1 billion more than what the majority party has requested in the bill that is before us today. Also, the bill before us today is \$1.3 billion over last year's bill.

Now, \$1 billion, that goes to the \$23 billion or so that the combination of the 12 appropriations bills will be over what the President has set forward. And even what the President set for-

ward, I might say, is a little on the high side. But when you look at \$23 billion in excess spending, \$1.1 billion just in this bill, Mr. Chairman, we have to start somewhere with fiscal restraint and fiscal discipline.

I am a new Member in Congress, and I heard a lot of talk during the campaign, especially by some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, that we were going to have a new day of fiscal discipline. Well, I am still waiting for that day to dawn, and I certainly don't see it today.

This bill is higher than what the President has asked, and that means that the President has pledged to veto this bill. If this goes through the House and then through the Senate and comes out in anything like the form that it is in right now, it's going to be vetoed; and then we are going to come back, and we will go through this whole exercise all over again.

So I think the way we should avoid that brain damage and that waste of time and waste of expense is just to bite the bullet right now. Let's stick to the amount that the President has requested. That is still over last year's budget.

So I think we should support the Westmoreland amendment. He has offered several good amendments. This is one of them. We have to start somewhere, or we are going to be back later this year.

So let's have some of the fiscal discipline that I thought we were going to be in store for, and this would be a good place to start. This is as good a place as any. And I urge adoption of this amendment.

Mr. BARROW. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, as Congress works to expand domestic energy production alternatives, one area of renewed focus is nuclear power production. For those of us who support nuclear energy, it is essential that there be adequate oversight and independent research to make sure that nuclear technology is safe and sustainable.

For the past 50 years, Mr. Chairman, that independent research has been the primary objective of Savannah River Ecology Lab. In fact, the ecology lab was founded to give the public confidence that the Energy Department's works at Savannah River Site would not sacrifice public safety or the environment.

That work continues today. In fact, the lab is the only lab in the Nation funded by the Department of Energy that conducts independent research into the long-term effects of low-level radiation and nuclear energy production.

Unfortunately, the Department of Energy doesn't seem to want independent oversight, and they have zeroed out the \$4 million in funding for the lab. It seems to me that \$4 million a year is a small price to pay to make sure that the ongoing work at the SRS, and nuclear energy production in general, is being done in a manner that

promotes public safety and protects our land, our air, and our waterways.

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman will yield, I thank the gentleman for bringing the work of this lab to the attention of the House and to the committee. I certainly will want to work with the gentleman on his concerns.

Mr. BARROW. Mr. Chairman, I look forward to continuing to work with him and our colleagues in the other body to make sure that the Nation has the adequate oversight and the independent research that is needed to safely promote nuclear technology.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Westmoreland amendment and in opposition of the underlying bill.

Let's just review the numbers for a moment. This Energy and Water appropriation bill not only exceeds the President's request; it also increases spending by twice the rate of inflation. Under the Democrat budget resolution, nonemergency spending will increase by \$81.4 billion compared to 2007, growing more than 9 percent, or triple the rate of inflation. That is triple the rate of our constituents', the American taxpayers', ability to pay for these bills. This is on top of the \$6 billion that was already spent in the current year omnibus, and the \$17 billion in non-war emergency spending that was added to the Iraq war supplemental.

But with this particular bill, here are my concerns: number one, it further opens the spigot on new spending. This is \$1.1 billion above the President's request and \$1.3 billion above the 2007 enacted levels. Again, far in excess of the rate of inflation.

Number two, it adds a lot of green for uncertain returns. The President requested \$1.2 billion for renewable and energy efficiency under the Advanced Energy Initiative and the Reducing U.S. Dependence on Imported Energy Sources. This bill increases spending by 50 percent, yet it is extremely unclear whether this enormous boost in spending will actually do anything to achieve energy independence.

This bill also exploits the Democrats' pre-funding maneuver. This was wrong when Republicans did it. It is wrong when Democrats do it. Both parties have been doing these pre-funding maneuvers. This is basically taking from next year's bill.

I think the fact that they have already pre-funded \$1.6 billion for FY 2008 Corps of Engineers spending frees up room under the cap so they can spend more money. So you have about a \$1.8 billion smoke-and-mirrors pre-funding mechanism that allows them to spend even more money. That brings the total on top of the \$1.3 billion to almost \$3 billion over last year's enacted levels.

Now, \$3 billion in an almost \$3 trillion budget, people ask why should it matter. Why should we talk about these things. Here is why, Mr. Chair-

man, this matters: it starts one step at a time.

If you want to be fiscally conservative, if you want to be fiscally disciplined and watch the way we spend taxpayer dollars, we have to do it at every stage in the process. We will have to watch how we spend our taxpayer dollars.

The big problem I have with this budget resolution that is guiding this process, the current budget resolution leads to the largest tax increase in American history. Why on Earth would we want to pass the largest tax increase in American history at a time when our economy needs more jobs?

The tax cuts that occurred in 2003 created an unprecedented 7.9 million new jobs. It gave us 3 years of double-digit revenue growth, which helped us cut the deficit by more than 50 percent. And the key to reducing the deficit further is not increasing taxes or increasing spending. It is controlling spending.

That is the different vision between our two parties. We believe we need to balance the budget. The Democrat budget, the Democratic Party budget, does that too. They propose a balanced budget as well. They propose a balanced budget at this level of taxing and spending, whereas we propose a balanced budget at this lower level of taxing and spending, because we fundamentally believe that people ought to be able to keep more of their own money in their own pocket.

We don't measure success of a nation by measuring how much more money we spend in Washington. We measure success of a nation by how free people are in their own lives and how they have an ability to prosper and grow and how jobs and opportunities are being created in America. That is what we believe measures success.

So if we pass budgets that simply call for all this new spending, if we pass budgets which call for 23 reserve funds to spend \$190 billion, in addition to what this budget right here does, what we are simply doing is saying we are going to tax people more, and then we are going to tax them more again, and we are going to spend that money.

That takes freedom and liberty away from taxpayers, away from individuals. That starves prosperity in America; it doesn't preserve prosperity in America. And that is why at every stage in this appropriations process, at every stage in this budget process we have to be mindful on how much money we are spending.

We are spending more than twice the rate of inflation in this bill. We are spending three times the rate of inflation on all of these appropriations bills. And that is far too much, Mr. Chairman. That is why I urge passage of the Westmoreland amendment and defeat of the underlying bill.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I also rise to support the amendment of my colleague from

Georgia, Mr. WESTMORELAND. I want to reiterate some of the comments that have already been made.

We simply have to start exercising fiscal discipline in this House. I often talk about how the Republicans missed the mark by overspending in the last few years and I talk about they, not we, because I came here as a fiscal conservative. I am even more of a fiscal conservative than I was when I first came to Congress, and I think most Members of my party have gotten up and admitted that we have spent too much money in the last few years. But most people now have seen the error of our ways, and we know that we have to start cutting, and we need to start right here. We talked about this last week, but we need to continue to talk about it.

We are on track for pretty soon 70 cents out of every dollar of Federal money going in to Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, in the very, very near future. We do not need to take our country in that direction. We have got to start trimming budgets, and this is the place to start now.

If we do not do that, we are not only going to see a repeat of what the Democrats are bringing to us, the biggest tax increase in American history this year, we are going to continue to see that to the point where we are going to be taxing most of the money that Americans make, and we are going to destroy this country with that kind of an attitude.

Our economy is doing great because of the tax cuts that were instituted in 2001 and 2003, and the only way we can maintain that type of economy is for us to control spending. We don't have a revenue problem in this country. We have a spending problem. We need serious fundamental reform of our spending. We need fiscal discipline.

As my colleagues have said, we are dealing with spending at twice the rate of inflation. American families cannot stand that. They do not want us to continue spending at the level that we are spending. It is on track to be the largest spending increase that we have seen in a long, long time in this country.

We heard over and over again last year on the floor from the party that is now the majority party, then the minority party, that we were spending too much money. Here they are, expanding what was spent last year, and expanding it at a rate that is simply unsustainable. They obviously did not mean what they said last year when they said we were spending too much money.

It is a small cut. Again, I reiterate what my colleagues have said. We have been in Washington too long when we think of \$18 million as a small cut. But as Everett Dirksen said many, many years ago, "A million here and a million there, and pretty soon you are talking about real money." That is what we are doing.

Let me put Federal spending into some context for the American people.

The United States Federal Government is on track to spend more money next year than Germany's entire economy in the year 2005. Germany is and has been the third largest economy in the world for a long, long time. There are only two countries in the world with entire economies that are larger than the U.S. Government budget, the United States itself and Japan.

So it is important that we start cutting back, and we have to do it a little bit at a time. If there is anybody in this country who believes that throwing more money at a problem from the Federal Government's level solves problems, then they haven't looked at the statistics on our education system, they haven't looked at the statistics on what has happened with control of disasters. We know that simply throwing money at a problem does not solve the problem.

We need accountability, we need efficiency, and we really need to focus on those issues before we spend additional dollars.

I think that we do need more oversight of how Federal Government programs are run. But simply throwing more money at the problem won't create that oversight for us. We have to get down in the trenches, examine programs, see how money is being spent, and say what effect did you get from this money you are currently spending.

□ 1330

In most cases we can probably cut budgets and come out far ahead.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, on Monday morning my constituents in Gainesville, Texas, woke up to a terrible sight. They woke up to discover their homes, businesses and city awash in water. Heavy rain in north Texas over the weekend and early into Monday morning overwhelmed Pecan Creek and other area streams. There have been several confirmed fatalities, 420 flooded homes, untold millions of dollars' worth of damage in the north Texas area.

The first responders, the fire people, the swift water rescue teams, are still in the process of rescue recovery and evaluating the damage and helping people whose homes and businesses have been destroyed.

This photograph was taken yesterday morning. It is reminiscent of photographs that were taken during the 1990s, during the 1980s, during the 1970s, during the 1960s, literally as far back

as I can remember. That is why I have requested funds for a section 205 flood control project in Gainesville, Texas, and I have every year for the last 3 years.

Progress has been made. Funds have been allocated to the project in fiscal year 2007, to the Corps' work plan to complete studies in engineering; but realistically, the time for study has long since passed. We need construction dollars.

Funding for Pecan Creek was my number one request in the Energy and Water appropriations bill this year, last year and the year prior. I hope that the chairman and the ranking member will help by providing the funding for the construction projects that are so desperately needed by the citizens of north Texas.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to enter into a colloquy with Chairman VISCLOSKEY about a critical issue relating to my district, and I appreciate the gentleman's leadership and the minority ranking member's leadership on the issue before us.

If I could direct this to Chairman VISCLOSKEY, as you know, being from the Great Lakes region, there is an ever-constant threat of shoreline erosion on the coast of the Great Lakes. My district is home to Pennsylvania's only shoreline on the Great Lakes on Lake Erie. Each year it is of vital importance that sand, displaced by winter storms, be renourished and redistributed on that shoreline.

Without annual nourishment, the shoreline would erode to the point where natural resources and habitats are jeopardized or even lost. Perhaps the most vivid example of this is Presque Isle. Presque Isle is a unique ecosystem and truly a natural gem. Every year as a State park it receives over 3.4 million visitors and it receives more visitors annually than any national park other than Yosemite.

Every year since 1975, the shoreline of this unique feature has received truckloads of replacement sand. This sand has kept the bird sanctuary at Gull Point effectively from eroding away. Birds that have been sighted here or call the sanctuary home include federally endangered species such as the piping plover. Without sand, however, Gull Point and other areas of Presque Isle's shoreline will be washed away, leaving these vulnerable species with even less habitat for recovery.

While there are no specific project allocations in this bill at this time, I encourage the subcommittee to allocate sufficient funds to the Army Corps of Engineers' construction account and make every effort to afford the beach nourishment project at Presque Isle at Erie, Pennsylvania, the resources required to be able to restore the sand lost from winter storms. And also, as part of an ongoing Federal commitment, a Federal-State partnership

which has existed since the Reagan administration. I thank the gentleman and welcome his consideration.

I yield to the chairman.

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania who serves as my partner on the Congressional Steel Caucus, we have other things in common, including my district abutting the Great Lakes, in my case Lake Michigan, for rising on this issue on the floor today. It is an important one.

The gentleman has my commitment that, especially knowing the challenges facing the Great Lakes region firsthand, that the subcommittee will make every effort to provide adequate resources to the Army Corps of Engineers for construction projects and also help the gentleman provide sufficient resources to the beach nourishment at Presque Isle.

Mr. ENGLISH. I thank the gentleman.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read. The Clerk read as follows:

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

For expenses necessary for the operation, maintenance, and care of existing river and harbor, flood and storm damage reduction, aquatic ecosystem restoration, and related projects authorized by law, including the construction of facilities, projects, or features (including islands and wetlands) to use materials dredged during Federal navigation maintenance activities; the mitigation of impacts on shorelines resulting from Federal navigation operation and maintenance activities; to address the effects of civil works projects owned or operated by the Corps on federally listed species; to provide security for infrastructure operated by the Corps, or operated on its behalf, including administrative buildings and facilities, and laboratories; to maintain harbor channels provided by a State, municipality, or other public agency that serve essential navigation needs of general commerce where authorized by law; and to conduct surveys and chart northern and northwestern lakes and connecting waters, clear channels, and remove obstructions to commercial navigation, \$2,655,241,000, to remain available until expended, of which \$53,585,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 1 New England; of which \$179,814,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 2 Mid Atlantic; of which \$367,101,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 3 South Atlantic Gulf; of which \$126,907,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 4 Great Lakes; of which \$342,354,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 5 Ohio; of which \$25,721,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 6 Tennessee; of which \$251,630,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 7 Upper Mississippi; of which \$166,946,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 8 Lower Mississippi; of which \$3,159,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 9 Souris-Red-Rainy; of which \$162,352,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 10 Missouri; of which \$213,500,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 11 Arkansas-White-Red; of which \$185,668,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 12 Texas-Gulf; of which \$30,812,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 13 Rio Grande; of which \$57,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 14 Upper Colorado; of which \$3,967,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 15 Lower Colorado; of which \$819,000 shall be for

projects and activities in Region 16 Great Basin; of which \$286,031,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 17 Pacific Northwest; of which \$125,998,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 18 California; of which \$26,811,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 19 Alaska; of which \$872,000 shall be for projects and activities in Region 20 Hawaii; of which such sums as are necessary to cover the Federal share of eligible operations and maintenance shall be derived from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund; of which such sums as become available in the special account for the Corps established by the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601-6a(i)), shall be used for resource protection, research, interpretation, and maintenance activities under this heading related to resource projection in areas operated by the Corps at which outdoor recreation is available; and of which such sums as become available pursuant to section 217 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996, shall be used to cover the cost of operation and maintenance of the dredged material disposal facilities for which such fees have been collected.

AMENDMENT NO. 25 OFFERED BY MR. WESTMORELAND

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 25 offered by Mr. WESTMORELAND:

Page 5, line 8, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$184,241,000)".

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Chairman, this amendment simply strikes \$184,241,000 from operations and maintenance to the Corps.

The amendment would save \$184 million, reducing the account from \$2.655 billion to \$2.471 billion. The account was funded at \$1.97 billion in fiscal year 2007. The bill increases this amount by 34 percent over last year's funding level and the amendment would limit this increase to 25 percent. While I may feel this is still too much money, it at least brings some type of accountability that we would want to increase this 34 percent in 1 year.

Mr. Chairman, I think as already testified today by many Members in talking about the bureaucracy, the red tape, the problems in prioritized spending, the lack of accountability, where better to make a difference and to make a change and to spend something than in the maintenance and operation of this agency.

We heard from the gentleman from Florida, Mr. KLEIN, talk about the problems that he had with regulations, and I know that Florida has a lot of different water problems and a lot of different Corps' interests down there.

I was pleased to hear Chairman VISCLOSKEY in his comments about bringing accountability to the Corps and bringing about accountability on this spending that seems to be run away. I really enjoyed talking to the ranking member about some of these problems that he has been addressing over the past years as chairman of this committee and how accountability needs to be brought to the attention of Members.

I don't know if I have mentioned it before, but this appropriations bill is \$1.1 billion over the President's request. I don't know if I have mentioned it before, but there has been at least \$105 billion in new Federal spending over the next 5 years that has been authorized by the new majority in this House, the Democratic leadership. And I don't know if I have mentioned it or not, but we have enacted the largest tax increase in American history.

This Democratic budget, and I don't know if I have mentioned this before or not, allows for \$23 billion in new spending over that of the President's request.

And I want to just make a couple of other comments. Mr. RYAN had mentioned economic development. I just want to say that 6 years ago the Dow was at 10,690. Today it is at 13,632. That is a pretty nice increase, seeing how it came on the heels of 9/11, and I think and I believe Mr. RYAN quoted the fact that 7.8 million new jobs since this economic development tax cut legislation has gone into effect. That's more than Europe and Japan combined.

The President's policies, economic policies, have been working. And whether we agree with the amount of money that he has spent or not, the economic policies are working and tax cuts do work.

And so I would ask that we would send a message to the American taxpayers that we want to cut \$184 million out of this bill that is already bloated, over \$1.1 billion. And I think we also want to send a message to some of these departments that we are going to hold you accountable and we are going to make sure that you are responsible for the way you spend money and that you are accountable to this Congress, because we are directly accountable to the people who elect us to this position.

So I ask Members to support this amendment and keep in mind that last year it was \$1.9 billion, that this year the President's request was \$2.4 billion, and the proposal is for \$2.6 billion.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I wish to speak in support of the Westmoreland amendment. I think it does a good job of bringing spending to more reasonable levels.

But I would like to speak about the broader issue. Not only does this particular appropriation bill increase spending by \$1.1 billion above the President's request, which is in excess of last year by double the rate of inflation, it is part of a broader appropriations effort to spend \$23 billion above the President's request and 9 percent increase from this year versus last year, triple the rate of inflation.

Here is the problem with all these bills that spend all this extra money: This puts the taxpayer on a collision course with higher taxes. Because the budget resolution which we are now operating under leads to the largest tax increase in American history, by pass-

ing these large appropriations bills, \$23 billion above the President's request, it puts us on a course for higher taxes.

Why is this a bad thing, Mr. Chairman? The reason this is such a bad thing is because these tax cuts, the tax relief gave us the economic prosperity we are enjoying today. It gave us the higher economic revenues that give us the ability to lower the deficit.

When we saw this problem in the economy in 2001 and 2003, consider all those problems America was facing, the Enron scandals, the dot-com bubble had burst, 9/11 happened, and we went into a recession.

What did Congress do at that time? Congress moved aggressively and swiftly to cut taxes, to cut tax rates on entrepreneurs, on small businesses, on corporations investing back in their businesses, on families and on taxpayers and working families.

What happened after that? Well, we created 7.9 million new jobs. Think of the fact that the eight quarters before tax cuts occurred, we had eight quarters of negative business investment. After that, we have had unprecedented business investment.

Think of the fact that we have averaged a job loss of 219,000 jobs per month before those tax cuts and now we are averaging almost 165,000 new jobs per month since those tax cuts.

□ 1345

Think of the fact, Mr. Chairman, that when the Enron bubble came and the dot-com bubble burst, people lost a lot of their savings when the market went down. Well, now the market is at an all-time high, and it is because of these tax cuts.

And so when we bring bills to the floor that promise all of this new spending, when we bring bills to the floor that spend \$23 billion above the President's request, when we pass a budget that proposes 23 new slush funds to spend 190 billion more dollars in spending on top of those tax increases, this is a recipe for higher taxes.

So, you see, Mr. Chairman, what is coming through here on the floor, bill after bill, appropriation bill after appropriation bill, is more spending, higher spending, which leads to higher taxes. The fact is in just the month of July, this majority is proposing to bring two reserve funds that will alone promise to spend \$70 billion, \$20 billion in the farm bill and \$50 billion on the SCHIP reauthorization. Where are they going to get that money from? Higher taxes.

So it's important that amendments like the Westmoreland amendment pass so that we can bring restraint to our spending levels. It is important that we don't pass these bloated appropriation bills that spend two to three times the rate of inflation, because that's two to three times the rate of our taxpayers', our constituents', ability to pay for these bills. And when we go on this collision course with all this new spending, \$110 billion of more

spending this year alone in just discretionary spending versus last year, \$190 billion in new spending proposals, in mandatory spending on these reserve funds, that puts the taxpayer on a collision course with higher taxes and that brings true this promise of the largest tax increase in American history which was passed by this majority in their budget resolution.

That is why we should not be passing these overinflated appropriation bills, and that is why we should be voting "aye" in favor of this Westmoreland amendment.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I would like to associate myself with the comments of the ranking member of the Budget Committee. What is of great concern here and why once again I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) for these series of amendments to at a minimum look at various spending levels and try to at least keep to the President's level, which so many of us already consider to be overinflated, particularly when we look at the fact of how much more the Federal budget has grown over the family budget. Since I have been on the face of the planet, the Federal budget has outgrown the family budget by a factor of about five to one. This cannot continue.

And so the gentleman from Georgia offers several amendments, all that would at least put us on the path to avoid the Presidential veto and spend less than what the new Democrat majority, tax-and-spend majority, wants to do.

Again, I think it's very important that we focus on the fact that this is part of a larger plan that we see unveiled in the budget resolution. This is our third appropriations bill that puts us on the course to spend the funds that will arise from this single largest tax increase in American history.

Mr. Chairman, for all those who are watching the proceedings of the House today, it might be interesting to note for them that the last time the Democrats had the majority, they enacted the single largest tax increase in American history. So they are at least consistent in what they are trying to do. The big debate in Washington is whether you want to tax more and spend more or whether you want to try to constrain the growth of the Federal budget to where the family budget can actually afford it.

I have heard other speakers rise and somehow point the finger at Republicans for fiscal irresponsibility. I must admit on occasion that perhaps is correct, but, Mr. Chairman, since I have been here and since I look in the rearview mirror, every time the Republicans have brought a budget to the floor, the Democrats have brought even a larger budget to the floor. They have decried the prescription drug benefit program of the Republicans for being overly expensive, but their alternative cost even more. And now already in

just the first 6 months of this 110th Congress, we have the Democrats wanting to increase nondefense appropriations by \$23 billion of taxpayer money, we should never forget that it's the taxpayers' money, above what we spent in 2007. They already added \$6 billion to the omnibus spending bill at the first of this Congress. They added \$17 billion in nonemergency supplemental spending to the bill that would support our troops in harm's way; but as we notice, as we read the fine print, we discovered it included spinach and peanuts and shrimp and everything else. And now we also understand that the Democrat majority has provided new spending on top of the old spending, \$105 billion over 5 years.

What the Republicans are trying to do is keep the tax relief that Americans have already been provided, keep it alive, make it permanent. Democrats say that we're not trying to increase taxes on the American people, although in their budget they have the single largest tax increase in American history, they just say, well, we're just going to let this tax relief expire. Well, Mr. Chairman, if you're a hardworking individual in the Fifth District of Texas and you make the same amount of money this year that you made last year and your tax bill goes up, now, that may be called in Washington, DC, letting tax relief expire, I can assure you that is a tax increase on hardworking people in the Fifth District of Texas and all over America.

That's why when this bill comes to the floor, and I know there are many worthy programs in this bill, but we can never forget the worthy energy bills that are in the family budget and the worthy water bills that are in the family budget, and you cannot fund the Federal budget without taking money from the family budget. That's why again one modest step would be to vote for this amendment from the gentleman from Georgia, and I once again want to commend him for his leadership on fiscal responsibility in this body.

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I do rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment and would note that the gentleman from Wisconsin in his earlier remarks used the term "slush fund." I would note that a slush fund connotes a fund raised by a group for corrupt practices as bribery or graft. I'm certain that the gentleman didn't mean to imply that.

Slush fund can also mean money once raised by the sale of garbage from a warship to buy small items of luxury for the crew. I'm sure the gentleman didn't mean that, either.

A slush fund can also mean a fund used by a group of office workers for entertainment, but I don't think the gentleman meant that.

A slush fund could also be a fund raised for undesignated purposes. I would not be so presumptuous as to speak for the gentleman from Wis-

consin, but I assume that was the import of his remarks, and in this case that would also be an incorrect assertion.

The subcommittee worked very hard for the first 6 months of this year to assess what the investment needs are for the United States of America, its citizens and its economic future. As I have mentioned earlier, and we had graphics to support the assertion, we have an aging infrastructure in the United States of America. Anyone who is on the roads, anyone who travels by air, anyone who travels by rail, anyone who travels on water understands that. And today we are particularly concerned about the aging water infrastructure.

I for one, and I believe all of the members of the subcommittee, am very concerned that much of the infrastructure in place as far as operation and maintenance is past its designed life. That pertains to almost half of the locks and dams in this country. We have not dredged many of our harbors, whether they be for recreation, which is an economic purpose as well, or for commerce to their authorized depths, let alone to the depths needed to ensure that they can operate effectively and cost efficiently, and this work must be done.

What we have created here is an investment fund for operation and maintenance, and I for one am proud that we have increased in that account more moneys to invest in the economic prosperity of our country, whether it pertain to navigation channels, locks and dams, or other water infrastructure.

I would ask my colleagues to oppose the amendment.

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I rise in opposition to the amendment to reduce funding for the Corps of Engineers operation and maintenance account. I confess that I don't understand this amendment beyond its superficial attempt to reduce bottom-line spending. This country has already expended billions of dollars in our water resources infrastructure. Much of that infrastructure is quite old and needs major rehab. I would invite any of the Members around that want to go and look, go look at the dams and the locks and the rivers that we have and look at the aging infrastructure that is there.

As any responsible homeowner knows, much of critical maintenance is penny-wise and pound-foolish if you put it off. The same maxim applies to our Nation's water resources infrastructure, though with a much larger role at stake.

And if we get it wrong, much more than just dollars are at stake. A large part of the failures that caused such a devastating loss of life and property in New Orleans came from inadequately maintained flood control projects. We cannot afford to make this mistake again.

Even the President said we have got to increase O&M. The President dramatically increased O&M. What I hear from everybody here is, well, they're always right down there. Well, they're not always right down there. They have never put the right amounts in this bill to begin with when it comes to energy and water, especially the water side.

So I oppose this amendment. Cutting funding for operation and maintenance for the Corps of Engineers is foolish and irresponsible at this time.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

REGULATORY PROGRAM

For expenses necessary for the administration of laws pertaining to the regulation of navigable waters and wetlands, \$180,000,000, to remain available until expended.

FORMERLY UTILIZED SITES REMEDIAL ACTION PROGRAM

For expenses necessary to clean up contamination from sites resulting from work performed as part of the Nation's early atomic energy program, \$130,000,000, to remain available until expended.

FLOOD CONTROL AND COASTAL EMERGENCIES

For expenses necessary to prepare for flood, hurricane, and other natural disasters and support emergency operations, repairs, and other activities in response to such natural disasters, as authorized by law, \$40,000,000, to remain available until expended.

EXPENSES

For expenses necessary for general administration and related functions of the civil works program in the headquarters of the Corps, the offices of the Division Engineers, the Humphreys Engineer Center Support Activity, the Institute for Water Resources, the Engineering Research and Development Center, and the Finance Center, \$171,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That no part of any other appropriation provided in this title shall be available to fund the civil works activities of the Office of the Chief of Engineers or the civil works executive direction and management activities of the offices of the Division Engineers.

OFFICE OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (CIVIL WORKS)

For expenses necessary for the Office of Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), as authorized by 10 U.S.C. 3016(b)(3), \$6,000,000.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISION

Appropriations in this title shall be available for official reception and representation expenses (not to exceed \$5,000); and during the current fiscal year the Revolving Fund, Corps of Engineers, shall be available for purchase (not to exceed 100 for replacement only) and hire of passenger motor vehicles.

GENERAL PROVISIONS, CORPS OF ENGINEERS—CIVIL

SEC. 101. (a) Except as provided under subsection (b), none of the funds provided under

this title shall be available for obligation or expenditure through a reprogramming of funds that—

(1) creates or initiates a new program, project, or activity;

(2) eliminates a program, project, or activity;

(3) increases funds for any program, project, or activity for which funds have been denied or restricted by this Act;

(4) reduces funds that are directed to be used for a specific program, project, or activity by this Act; or

(5) increases or reduces funds for any program, project, or activity by more than \$2,000,000 or 25 percent, whichever is less;

(b) Subsection (a)(1) shall not apply to any project or activity authorized under section 205 of the Flood Control Act of 1948; section 14 of the Flood Control Act of 1946; section 208 of the Flood Control Act of 1954; section 107 of the River and Harbor Act of 1960; section 103 of the River and Harbor Act of 1962; section 111 of the River and Harbor Act of 1968; section 1135 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986; section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996; sections 204 and 207 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1992; or section 933 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986.

SEC. 102. None of the funds made available in this title may be used to award any continuing contract or make modifications to any existing continuing contract that commits an amount for a project in excess of the amounts appropriated for that project that remain unobligated, except that such amounts may include any funds that have been made available through reprogramming to that project pursuant to section 101 of this Act.

SEC. 103. (a) None of the funds provided in this Act shall be available for operation and maritime maintenance of the hopper dredge McFarland.

(b) Subsection (a) shall not apply to funds required for the decommissioning of the vessel.

SEC. 104. The Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, is directed to reduce by 35 percent the full-time employees at the Sacramento District Regulatory Division office of the Corps of Engineers.

SEC. 105. None of the funds appropriated in this Act or any other Act may be used to conduct a public-private competition or direct conversion under the OMB Circular A-76 or any other administrative regulation, directive, or policy for any Corps of Engineers program, project or activity.

AMENDMENT NO. 23 OFFERED BY MR. SESSIONS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 23 offered by Mr. SESSIONS:

Strike section 105.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, my amendment would strike section 105 of this legislation which as drafted would prevent the funds spent by this bill from being used to conduct public-private competitions or to direct A-76 conversions for any Army Corps of Engineers program, project, or activity.

This underlying language would present an enormous setback for competition in government sourcing, costing the Federal Government millions of dollars a year by preventing private

sector contracting in the Army Corps of Engineers for everything from janitorial and food services to the engineering and design of locks and dams which private sector contractors have done competitively for years at the Federal, State, and local levels.

□ 1400

While this policy may be good for increasing dues payments to public sector union bosses, it is unquestionably bad for taxpayers and for Federal agencies because these agencies will have less money to spend on their core missions if the opportunity to use competition and private sector efficiencies is taken away from them.

In 2006, Federal agencies competed only 1.7 percent of their commercial workforce, which makes up less than one-half of 1 percent of the entire civilian workforce. This very small use of competition for services is expected to generate savings of \$1.3 billion over the next 5-10 years.

Competitions completed since 2003 are expected to produce almost \$7 billion in savings for taxpayers over the next 5-10 years. This means that taxpayers will receive a return of about \$31 for every dollar spent on competition, with an annualized expected savings of more than \$1 billion.

At the Corps, in 2006 three public/private competitions were competed, involving IT support, financial services, and public works.

The largest of these, dealing with IT support services, has a projected savings of \$960 million over a 6-year period. By introducing competition and leveraging the government's size to reduce equipment maintenance and replacement, the government will now be able to save almost \$1 billion, but without my amendment, similar future efforts will be impossible.

Mr. Chairman, in this time of stretched budgets and bloated Federal spending, Congress should be looking to use all of the tools it can to find taxpayer savings and to reduce the cost of services that very easily can be found in the Yellow Pages.

I insert into the RECORD at this point a letter of support for this amendment from the American Society of Civil Engineers and a letter of support for the amendment from the Council on Federal Procurement of Architectural and Engineering Services.

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS,

Washington, DC, June 19, 2007.

Hon. PETE SESSIONS,
Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SESSIONS: The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) is writing to support your amendment to H.R. 2641 that would strike language prohibiting the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from conducting any public-private competition or direct conversion under OMB Circular A-76.

ASCE believes that section 105 of the bill as reported effectively would stop the USACE from employing engineers in the private sector. Such a provision is contrary to sound public policy. We think federal, state,

and local government agencies responsible for major civil engineering works must maintain professional engineering expertise within their organizations by employing civil engineers and providing for their professional development. Nevertheless, public sector engineering projects that can be accomplished more efficiently by private engineering firms should be contracted out with proper oversight by the public agency. The ratio of in-house engineering to contracted engineering services should be based upon an assessment of the agency's continuing project and policy requirements rather than on rigid rules or percentages fixed by legislation or regulation. We urge all Members to vote "yes" on the Sessions amendment to strike section 105 from H.R. 2641.

If ASCE can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or Michael Charles.

Sincerely yours,

BRIAN PALLASCH,
Director of Government Relations.

RESTON, VA,
June 19, 2007.

Hon. PETE SESSIONS,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE SESSIONS: The Council on Federal Procurement of Architectural and Engineering Services (COFPAES) is a coalition of the nation's design professionals. Our combined membership of over 1000,000 individual practitioners from the private sector and public service are part of our member organizations—American Congress on Surveying and Mapping, American Institute of Architects, American Society of Civil Engineers, Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors (MAPPS), and National Society of Professional Engineers.

COFPAES strongly supports your amendment to H.R. 2641 the Energy and Water Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2008. We oppose the language currently in the bill that would effectively prohibit the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from contracting with the private sector.

COFPAES has long advocated a balance between the in-house capabilities of the Corps of Engineers and contracting with firms in the private sector. We believe the language in H.R. 2641 would prohibit achieving such a balance. We believe there is the need for a core, in-house capability in the Corps, and utilization of the professional expertise in the private A/E community.

Current law, 33 U.S.C. 622 and 33 U.S.C. 624, already protect both the taxpayer and Corps employees. Further restrictions on use of the private sector are not necessary, and indeed, would inhibit the ability of the Corps to utilize private sector capabilities that the Corps needs.

We urge the House to approve your amendment and we thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

JOHN M. PALATIELLO,
COFPAES Administrator.

Mr. Chairman, I urge all of my colleagues to support this commonsense taxpayer-first amendment and to oppose the underlying provisions to benefit public sector union bosses by keeping cost-saving competition in the Army Corps of Engineers.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any Member seek time in opposition to the amendment of the gentleman from Texas?

Does a Member seek time regarding the amendment of the gentleman from Texas?

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

First I'm heartened that nobody has risen to oppose the amendment. I've heard many of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle in a different context criticize the administration for not always having what they considered to be a sufficient competitive bidding process on contracts, and so I'm a little curious how this language ended up in the bill in the first place. But why wouldn't we want more competition?

Again, after our colleagues on the other side of the aisle helped put in place the single largest tax increase in American history, and then start to spend that money in our third appropriations bill that will again grow government way beyond the rate of inflation, we had better look for savings everywhere we can find it.

How can you criticize the administration for no-bid contracts, and then here's an opportunity here for competitive bidding, to somehow turn it down? So I don't know why this language is in the bill in the first place, but I want to congratulate and commend the gentleman from Texas for his amendment.

It has, I think, the potential to save the poor, beleaguered taxpayer millions, if not billions, of dollars. Is there anything not more ingrained in the American character than competition? We ought to try to make these contracts as competitive as possible.

Again, we have to put this whole piece of legislation in context. It's the third appropriations bill arising from a budget resolution that calls for the single largest tax increase in American history, approximately \$3,000 of increased taxes for hardworking American families as they try to meet their education needs, as they try to meet their health care needs, as they try to meet their housing needs.

So I know there's a number of good programs that are contained within this legislation. In many respects, we're not having a debate today about how much money we're going to spend. We are debating who's going to do the spending, and there are many of us on the floor today who want to make sure that American families get to do more of that spending.

We continue to kick this can down the road. It's simply unfair to place such a tax burden on the American people. The average American family already pays \$22,000 a year combined in Federal taxes, and now as the Democrat majority is promising to impose an additional \$3,000 a year in taxes, and then, even worse, because their budget resolution from which this appropriation bill follows is silent on the issue of what to do with out-of-control entitlement spending, which is putting our sons and daughters, our grandchildren, on automatic pilot to have their taxes doubled so they will never be able to afford their own homes, send their kids to college, start their own business. As the Comptroller General said, and I

paraphrase, we are on the verge of being the first generation in American history to leave the next generation with a lower standard of living.

Now, I wish there was a lot more that we could do today within this piece of legislation, but at least by adopting the amendment of the gentleman from Texas, we will take a few small steps in doing what every other American considers to be common sense, and that is to ensure a maximum of competitive bidding, we would take at least a few small steps towards trying to save the American people from this increased tax burden that, again, subtracts from their dreams of their first home, their dreams of launching a small business.

This is all part, again, of a budget that imposes the single largest tax increase on the American people in history. After trying to spend an additional \$23 billion over the level spent last year, \$6 billion that was added to the omnibus, \$17 billion added to the war supplemental in nonemergency spending, the Democrat majority now is going to allow unlimited emergency spending, giving Members practically the ability to rubber-stamp anything with "emergency." And not only does their budget not do anything to reform entitlement spending, it creates reserve funds that promises more entitlement spending, Mr. Chairman, to make the problem even worse.

So we should all adopt the amendment of the gentleman from Texas. I applaud his leadership. It's a small step, a commonsense step to try to save the family budget from the Federal budget.

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment because I believe the actions we have taken in the subcommittee will save the American taxpayers' money.

I would first note that all A-76 studies performed by the Corps of Engineers have been won by Corps employees. So the first question is: Why do it?

The Corps is working under also an arbitrary numerical quota to review certain numbers of jobs in certain time periods without research and analysis. It would suggest that this is an arbitrary requirement put into place by the Office of Management and Budget, and there is a doubt, at least in this Member's mind, that it has been subjected to analysis at OMB.

I also believe that historically there has been opposition in this body to privatization. That has been bipartisan. I would point out that from a monetary standpoint, that the cost of these studies often exceeds the benefits; and of those functions that are easily contracted out, the remainder are difficult to separate into contractible and governmental function groups.

The fact is that the committee recommendation allows the Corps to continue with high-performing organization studies which follow the same study process, with similar results,

without incurring the additional time and costs associated with contracting competitions.

So what we would want to do is to use those high-performing organization studies, apply less cost to the taxpayers and to move this process along. I am opposed to the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I was compelled to come and talk just a little bit about this amendment, which I commend my friend from Texas for offering, because I've been surprised at the rapidity with which the new majority has regained their old stripes that they lost 12-plus years ago.

We were sitting in committee the other day and marking or finishing the prospects of a bill that we're passing out of the Education Committee, and it turns out that there was more estimated revenue that came into the Federal Government and was eligible for appropriation by the committee. And so the majority party, within very short order, stated that they had found hundreds of millions of new dollars and they were offering an amendment to recognize that, in fact, they had found hundreds of millions of new dollars; and then, within seconds, appropriated or authorized the spending of the hundreds of millions of new dollars.

So I was somewhat bemused by that and made the comment at the time that I was pleased that they had found the hundreds of millions of new dollars; I was somewhat surprised that they had spent it so rapidly.

And so I would draw your attention, Mr. Chairman, to the fact that an issue, a process by which the Federal Government has been utilizing to save hundreds of millions of dollars and, yes, billions of dollars, as stated by the gentleman from Texas, that of providing for competitive bidding, is an appropriate process. It's an appropriate process for our Federal Government to use. It's a responsible process so that we may spend hard-earned taxpayer dollars wisely. And so I'm distressed that this bill would include a section that would preclude competitive bidding.

As everyone knows and understands kind of inherently, there are many, many things that the private sector can do much more reasonably and responsibly and efficiently and without significant expenditure of resources than can the public sector. And so it just makes no sense to me, and certainly no sense to my constituents back in the Sixth District of Georgia, that we would adopt a new measure that would provide that we ought not have competitive bidding.

But I think it points out a significant distinction, a difference between the two parties. The minority party believes that it's appropriate to have competitive bidding, that it's appropriate to utilize the full robust nature of the private sector whenever possible, in some instances it's not possible, but

whenever possible in order to save hard-earned taxpayer money.

The majority party apparently believes, given that this is included in the bill, that that's not an appropriate concern of the Federal Government, that we ought not be looking for all efficiencies possible, and I think that's an appropriate distinction to draw.

I think it's a conclusion that, obviously, Mr. Chairman, the American people will draw given this provision in the bill. It's a distinction that I would suggest the American people weren't aware of when they went to the polls last November. It's a distinction I do believe, however, they will be paying attention to as future elections arise.

But I just want to commend my friend from Texas for this remarkably commonsense amendment, for appropriately reviewing the legislation and identifying those areas where, in fact, savings could occur; and part of our responsibility certainly is providing money for the necessary activities of the Federal Government, but it's also part of our responsibility to be as prudent as we can with hard-earned taxpayer money.

I also want to commend my other friend from Texas, who was here just before me, talking about the importance of providing the distinction in the majority party already passing a budget that has the largest tax increase in the history of our Nation.

□ 1415

That, again, is evidence of their return to the previous stripes that they had 12-plus years ago.

I am pleased to join my colleague from Texas in this commonsense, wise, fiscally prudent, and fiscally responsible amendment.

I urge my colleagues to adopt the amendment.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I come to the floor to speak in favor of this very important amendment.

Serving on the Budget Committee, as I have the honor and privilege of doing, I see the relevance of addressing such an amendment as this, that goes to the very heart of the principles that Republicans bring to the handling of the budget.

As the previous gentleman just ended his remarks, I will begin mine. What we have seen in the last several weeks with regard to the legislation that is coming down, what I have seen as a member of the Budget Committee, gives us, this House, the largest tax increase in U.S. history, a breaking of the promises under rules that have been made during the past campaign, the establishment, which we were able to defeat this past week, of the creation of slush funds to hide some of those dollars going forward.

Why is all of that relevant to the amendment that is here before us? From a very practical purpose, when a

family or a small business sets about to handle its daily budget, how do they do so? They do so from a logical perspective in deciding what is in the best interest of that family as far as the purchases they make, or when a business sets out to create its budget for the year ahead and the purchases that it will be required to make.

How does it do so? It does so on a logical, regional basis. It looks out at all the purviews and the parameters of the opportunities before them, and then decides what is best for their family or for their business.

You can say a family does a competitive bidding process, although the average family probably doesn't think of it that way. When they do their shopping from grocery store to grocery store, or from Wal-Mart to Target or to Kmart or wherever else, they are, in fact, engaging in a competitive business process, business nature, if you will.

When a business does it, a small business, which is the backbone of the American economy, they engage in a competitive business bidding process as well. They know what they need in order for their business to survive in this year and this quarter and the years ahead. They know what the parameters are and the order that they must meet. They will go out and about and engage in a competition, if you will, between the options that are out there before them and decide which one works best for them, which is at the best price, which is the most economical and which is the most efficient.

If the family budget can make these decisions, if the small businesses of this country can make those decisions, then I think it's incumbent upon us here in this House, this House of the people, to make, likewise, those decisions in the same manner as well. As the gentleman from Texas often says, the focus should be on the family budget and not on the Federal budget.

Likewise, when it comes to the way we handle the taxpayers' dollars, the focus should be on the same way the family and the small business handle their budget and their procurement, instead of the role and the methods we have done in the past.

That's why I come to the floor this afternoon in support of the other gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), his amendment today. Because that's simply what this amendment will do, will strike section 105 from the bill and that is the section which prohibits funds from being used under OMB's circular 876, which is basically the outsourcing proposed process: "to process or approve a competition with regard to the Army Corps of Engineers."

By striking this provision, OMB would be allowed to use a competitive process in conducting private-public competition to determine who, the government agency or a private business, performs certain activities. Just think for a moment, if we were to engage in such activities, how much further the hard-earned tax dollar of the American

public could go in this House, in this American economy that we have. Just think how many more of these necessary programs that we are called upon to support could be engaged in and provided.

Now, I come from the great State of New Jersey, a State that oftentimes has to look to the core and to the Federal Government for various programs to provide for the health and safety of the citizens of not only my district but my State as well.

Think for a moment how much further we would be able to go in providing these services to the State in my district and my county, and through the State of New Jersey as well. Think of how much further we could go if we could be able to provide these services in a more economical and efficient basis.

The amendment before us does that. It will allow for the operation of the Federal Government to engage itself the same way as a small business does, the same way as a family budget does.

Closing then, bringing this all back to my opening comments with regard to what we have seen at the beginning of the process with the Democrat budget and what we have seen in the past several weeks with regard to the largest tax increase for the American family in U.S. history, what this amendment will do is drive down the pressure on this government to raise taxes on the backs of American families.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I was not going to speak on this amendment. I was somewhat encouraged by the silence on the other side of the aisle when it originally came out.

But then when the majority party indicated that they are going to oppose this amendment, I have to stand up and say just, at least, one thing. We are going to have some amendment debates later today about how much money to spend on various programs and how much to spend on various things and how much to spend overall on this bill, whether we should be spending more of the taxpayers' money on things or less of the taxpayers' money on things.

We are going to have that debate today and tomorrow and the next day, and there are certainly disagreements between the majority side and the minority side on those issues as to whether we should tax people more and spend their money or tax people less and let them spend their own money.

But, interestingly, this amendment isn't about that. This amendment doesn't change the funding in the bill. It simply says we ought to have a mechanism to make the money that's there go farther.

I really don't understand why my Democratic colleagues would have some ideological objection to that. If we are going to spend a certain amount of money on a program, regardless of

what that program does, couldn't we all agree that we would like it to do as much as it can with that amount of money?

Certainly, if we allow private contractors, or contractors, the opportunity to say, hey, we can do this thing for less money, and we can do the same thing, and the agency determines that it's the same thing for less money, wouldn't we want them to do that?

This, actually, is not about spending less money. We will get to that later. But this is about having the money we spend go farther.

I mean, it's just like for people, Mr. Chairman, that are watching at home, imagining that, well, I am going to go out and, you know, get dry cleaning today, but I don't care how much it costs, and I don't care if the place next door does it cheaper, and they are every bit as good or better. I don't care, I am going to use the more expensive place because we are not going to make competition.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Would the gentleman yield? I have an inquiry of the Chair.

The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. POMEROY). Does the gentleman from California yield to the gentleman?

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. I will yield.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Is it correct to reference people watching House proceedings on television, or are we not supposed to do that?

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Mr. Chairman, I believe that I clearly said, "Mr. Chairman, people who see this may wonder."

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman will address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. I did, I believe. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, whether it's you, or anyone in this room or whoever, we have money that we spend on things, and we like to shop to see if we are getting the best price, getting the same product or as good a product or a better product for the best price. That's what this amendment says, is that we're going to allow people to shop or get the better product for the best price.

Mr. Chairman, it is beyond me why the majority party would object to something so sensible, so reasonable in being a steward of the taxpayers' dollars.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas will be postponed.

The Committee will rise informally. The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SERRANO) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

The Committee resumed its sitting.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

TITLE II—DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT COMPLETION ACCOUNT

For carrying out activities authorized by the Central Utah Project Completion Act (titles II through VI of Public Law 102-575), \$41,380,000, to remain available until expended, of which \$976,000 shall be deposited into the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Account for use by the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission.

In addition, for necessary expenses incurred in carrying out related responsibilities of the Secretary of the Interior, \$1,620,000, to remain available until expended.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

The following appropriations shall be expended to execute authorized functions of the Bureau of Reclamation:

WATER AND RELATED RESOURCES (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For management, development, and restoration of water and related natural resources and for related activities, including the operation, maintenance, and rehabilitation of reclamation and other facilities, participation in fulfilling related Federal responsibilities to Native Americans, and related grants to, and cooperative and other agreements with, State and local governments, federally recognized Indian tribes, and others, \$871,197,000, to remain available until expended, of which \$57,615,000 shall be available for transfer to the Upper Colorado River Basin Fund and \$26,825,000 shall be available for transfer to the Lower Colorado River Basin Development Fund; of which such amounts as may be necessary may be advanced to the Colorado River Dam Fund; of which not more than \$500,000 is for high priority projects which shall be carried out by the Youth Conservation Corps, as authorized by section 106 of Public Law 91-378 (16 U.S.C. 1706): *Provided*, That such transfers may be increased or decreased within the overall appropriation under this heading: *Provided further*, That of the total appropriated, the amount for program activities that can be financed by the Reclamation Fund or the Bureau of Reclamation special fee account established by section 4(i) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601-6a(i)) shall be derived from that Fund or account: *Provided further*, That funds contributed under the Act of March 4, 1921 (43 U.S.C. 395) are available until expended for the purposes for which contributed: *Provided further*, That funds advanced under the Act of January 12, 1927 (43