

Mr. COBLE. In closing, Mr. Speaker, this addresses a problem that has come across my path many times. Back home, Mr. CONYERS, I don't know about you in Michigan, but in North Carolina, I hear this complaint frequently. A document properly notarized in one State, and then as I said, it must be by happenstance, crosses a State line and goes to another State, and then, of course, denial rears her ugly head, and all sorts of confusion results.

□ 1630

So this addresses a problem that needs to be fixed, and I think this legislation does it.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I commend the author of this bill, Mr. ADERHOLT, and always I am pleased to come to the floor with the floor manager on the Republican side, Mr. COBLE.

And I only want to underscore the fact that communications interstate are so common and frequent that this is a long overdue and important improvement in the relations of legal documents between the citizens of the several States. So I am proud to sign off with you and join in urging that this matter be unanimously supported by the distinguished House of Representatives.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1979, as amended.

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

The title was amended so as to read: "A bill to require any Federal or State court to recognize any notarization made by a notary public licensed by a State other than the State where the court is located when such notarization occurs in or affects interstate commerce."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TRANSITIONAL MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AND ABSTINENCE EDUCATION PROGRAM EXTENSION

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1701) to provide for the extension of transitional medical assistance (TMA) and the abstinence education program through the end of fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The text of the Senate bill is as follows:

S. 1701

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF TRANSITIONAL MEDICAL ASSISTANCE (TMA) AND ABSTINENCE EDUCATION PROGRAM THROUGH THE END OF FISCAL YEAR 2007.

Section 401 of division B of the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-432) is amended—

(1) by striking "June 30" and inserting "September 30"; and

(2) by striking "third quarter" each place it appears and inserting "fourth quarter".

SEC. 2. SUNSET OF THE LIMITED CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT PROVISION FOR CERTAIN BENEFICIARIES UNDER THE MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PROGRAM.

Section 1851(e)(2)(E) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-21(e)(2)(E)), as added by section 206(a) of division B of the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006, is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking "2007 or 2008" and inserting "the period beginning on January 1, 2007, and ending on July 31, 2007."; and

(2) in clause (iii)—

(A) in the heading, by striking "YEAR" and inserting "THE APPLICABLE PERIOD"; and

(B) by striking "the year" and inserting "the period described in such clause".

SEC. 3. OFFSETTING ADJUSTMENT IN MEDICARE ADVANTAGE STABILIZATION FUND.

Section 1858(e)(2)(A)(i) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-27a(e)(2)(A)(i)), as amended by 301 of division B of the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006, is amended by striking "the Fund during the period" and all that follows and inserting "the Fund—

"(I) during 2012, \$1,600,000,000; and

"(II) during 2013, \$1,790,000,000."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation that provides a 3-month extension to the transitional medical assistance program under Medicaid.

TMA provides vital support for low-income American families moving off welfare and into work. Under the TMA program, families whose earnings would otherwise make them ineligible for Medicaid can receive up to 12 months of Medicaid coverage. Without TMA, many families transitioning from welfare to work would go without health insurance and could end up back on welfare.

Families leaving welfare often encounter difficulties such as securing health insurance because they have taken low-wage jobs that do not offer employer-sponsored health coverage. In some cases this choice could serve as

a deterrent to returning to work, and we want to provide folks with as many incentives as possible to return to work. According to the Congressional Research Service, 79 percent of people with incomes of at least 200 percent of the Federal poverty level benefit from employer-sponsored health insurance, yet only 19 percent of working-age individuals with incomes below the poverty line receive health care coverage through employment. These are folks who earn \$10,210 or less a year. If they can't get coverage through their employer, it is essentially cost-prohibitive for them to purchase health insurance.

No one should be made to choose between a job and health insurance. Thanks to TMA, many Americans are spared this tough choice and allowed to move off welfare and into a job while maintaining their health coverage. Without TMA, many of our most vulnerable Americans would be unable to access the health coverage they need.

In my State of Texas, TMA helps provide more than 111,000 people each month continued treatment for ongoing health care needs. A gap in care would be particularly problematic for the one out of four mothers in the program who are in poor or fair health yet transitioning from welfare to work. The extensions of the program is critical to their continued access to necessary health care.

Again in Texas, TMA also reimburses medical providers for more than \$300 million in annual expenses for acute medical care, prescription drugs, and other approved Medicaid services. Without TMA, these costs for medically necessary services would be shifted to local governments or charitable organizations, or worse, the client may not receive needed care at all.

Mr. Speaker, TMA enjoys wide-ranging bipartisan support. The National Governors Association strongly supports TMA and its extension. According to the National Governors Association, "without access to regular health care, health problems of a new worker or the worker's family members are likely to lead to greater absenteeism and possibly job loss."

TMA is also supported by the National Conference of State Legislatures, the American Public Health Association, and the National Association of State Medicaid Directors. The administration also supports this vital program as evidenced by the fact that the President included a 1-year extension of TMA in his fiscal year 2008 budget proposal.

Mr. Speaker, in the past Congress has always acted in bipartisan fashion to extend TMA in combination with an equal extension of Federal abstinence education programs. While there is no shortage of debate or opinion on the merits of abstinence education programs, I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this approach, at least for the short term, so we can ensure that hardworking American families don't lose their health care under

the transitional medical assistance program.

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

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

This statement that I am about to read is the statement of Congressman JOE BARTON, the distinguished gentleman from Texas, who I am told is in transit and is not able to be here:

I rise in support of the bill before us today, which extends the programs of transitional medical assistance and the title V abstinence education program. I am pleased that the Congress is able to work together to extend funding for these programs.

I believe it is important that we support the goals of abstinence education and not get bogged down by the politics that inevitably surround the concept. Our school children deserve the opportunity to receive an education regarding the merits of an abstinent lifestyle. Title V funds are optional for States, and it does not prohibit the funding and teaching of contraceptive-based programs.

Abstinence education provides teens the opportunities to learn about the ramifications of sexual activity including pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. As I am sure many of my colleagues would attest, I have heard from numerous programs within my State, and I am sure in the State of Texas from where Mr. BARTON hails, that rely on this Federal funding. They believe in the program and hope to continue providing abstinence education opportunities to local teens.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate my support for this bill and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1701.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. 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.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 40 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1837

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SCOTT of Virginia) at 6 o'clock and 37 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed will be taken tomorrow.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2669, COLLEGE COST REDUCTION ACT OF 2007

Mr. ARCURI, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-224) on the resolution (H. Res. 531) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2669) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 601 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2008, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

TIME TO LEAVE IRAQ

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, the time has come for us to leave Iraq. The President intends to continue his war until he leaves office and let the next President clean up his mess. White House advisers debate how to buy more time.

Over 3,600 U.S. troops have been killed. Hundreds, perhaps thousands more, will be killed while we wait for this President to end this war. Thirty thousand U.S. troops wounded. Will that number double while we wait for this President to end his war? Thousands of Iraqi men, women, and children dead, \$10 billion each month squandered. Are we ready to spend \$200 billion more?

On Sunday, the New York Times laid out why, how, and when the U.S. should end this war. It pulled no punches about how ugly the aftermath might be. It was a hard and honest statement of where we stand right now and where we need to go.

Mr. Speaker, Congress must act. It is time to end this war.

[From the New York Times, July 8, 2007]

THE ROAD HOME

It is time for the United States to leave Iraq, without any more delay than the Pentagon needs to organize an orderly exit.

Like many Americans, we have put off that conclusion, waiting for a sign that President Bush was seriously trying to dig the United States out of the disaster he created by invading Iraq without sufficient cause, in the face of global opposition, and without a plan to stabilize the country afterward.

At first, we believed that after destroying Iraq's government, army, police and economic structures, the United States was obliged to try to accomplish some of the goals Mr. Bush claimed to be pursuing, chiefly building a stable, unified Iraq. When it became clear that the president had neither the vision nor the means to do that, we argued against setting a withdrawal date while there was still some chance to mitigate the chaos that would most likely follow.

While Mr. Bush scorns deadlines, he kept promising breakthroughs—after elections, after a constitution, after sending in thousands more troops. But those milestones came and went without any progress toward a stable, democratic Iraq or a path for withdrawal. It is frighteningly clear that Mr. Bush's plan is to stay the course as long as he is president and dump the mess on his successor. Whatever his cause was, it is lost.

The political leaders Washington has backed are incapable of putting national interests ahead of sectarian score settling. The security forces Washington has trained behave more like partisan militias. Additional military forces poured into the Baghdad region have failed to change anything.

Continuing to sacrifice the lives and limbs of American soldiers is wrong. The war is sapping the strength of the nation's alliances and its military forces. It is a dangerous diversion from the life-and-death struggle against terrorists. It is an increasing burden on American taxpayers, and it is a betrayal of a world that needs the wise application of American power and principles.

A majority of Americans reached these conclusions months ago. Even in politically polarized Washington, positions on the war no longer divide entirely on party lines. When Congress returns this week, extricating American troops from the war should be at the top of its agenda.

That conversation must be candid and focused. Americans must be clear that Iraq, and the region around it, could be even bloodier and more chaotic after Americans leave. There could be reprisals against those who worked with American forces, further ethnic cleansing, even genocide. Potentially destabilizing refugee flows could hit Jordan and Syria. Iran and Turkey could be tempted to make power grabs. Perhaps most important, the invasion has created a new stronghold from which terrorist activity could proliferate.

The administration, the Democratic-controlled Congress, the United Nations and America's allies must try to mitigate those outcomes—and they may fail. But Americans must be equally honest about the fact that keeping troops in Iraq will only make things worse. The nation needs a serious discussion, now, about how to accomplish a withdrawal and meet some of the big challenges that will arise.

THE MECHANICS OF WITHDRAWAL

The United States has about 160,000 troops and millions of tons of military gear inside Iraq. Getting that force out safely will be a formidable challenge. The main road south to Kuwait is notoriously vulnerable to roadside bomb attacks. Soldiers, weapons and vehicles will need to be deployed to secure bases while airlift and sealift operations are organized. Withdrawal routes will have to be guarded. The exit must be everything the invasion was not: based on reality and backed by adequate resources.

The United States should explore using Kurdish territory in the north of Iraq as a secure staging area. Being able to use bases and ports in Turkey would also make withdrawal faster and safer. Turkey has been an inconsistent ally in this war, but like other nations, it should realize that shouldering