



PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE CONSIDERED AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H.R. 1172

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered as the first sponsor of H.R. 1172, a bill originally introduced by Representative Millender-McDonald of California, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprints pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PAS-TOR). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

#### CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2272, AMERICA COMPETES ACT

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the rule, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 2272) to invest in innovation through research and development, and to improve the competitiveness of the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 602, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of August 1, 2007, at page H9414.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request, and also to thank him for his help on this bill we are going to be taking up.

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report. I want to applaud the work of Chairman GORDON, the conferees and the staff for getting us to this historic place in time on behalf of this COMPETES Act, which will make a great difference in America's economy in the future.

The issue of competitiveness has been at the top of our agenda since November 2005 when the House Democrats under the leadership of Speaker PELOSI, unveiled the Innovation Agenda.

The Innovation Agenda, which was developed in consultation with the business community, is aimed at keeping America competitive in our ever growing global economy.

In addition to the work by the Speaker, the Committee on Education and Labor focused the first hearings of this Congress on how to address the challenges posed by the middle class squeeze.

Through the Innovation Agenda and through our hearings, a common denominator was the desire by the business community to engage in ways to create a more innovative workforce that is better prepared to enter the growing high tech industry.

This conference bill meets this objective through partnerships that will engage the business community with higher education to create programs that will educate and train individuals to meet the industry's needs.

Additionally, I am particularly pleased that the conference bill addresses another key goal of the Innovation Agenda, which is to ensure a highly qualified teacher is in every classroom.

The new programs in the National Science Foundation and the Department of Education, modeled after the successful UTEACH and CaTEACH programs, will go a long way to better preparing teachers for the classroom.

I am also pleased to see a true vision for education in this bill with programs that encourage math education, ensuring access to advanced placement/IB courses, and the creation of P-16 councils which will help states better understand where students start and where they need to go.

Again, I applaud the work of the conferees. I look forward to continue working on securing funding for these valuable programs.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that we have had differences of opinion, differences of policy and differences concerning procedure for the last couple of days. You have that at the end of a session before you go into a work period, and I am afraid we are going to have some more, and that is unfortunate. But we have an opportunity, at least for the next hour, to have a little window of civility, a little window to work together on a bill, a conference report that is bipartisan and bicameral. It is a competitiveness bill. It is a bill that is going to make America a better place for all of our kids and grandkids. I want to take just a little time to tell you about it.

This bill is a compilation of five bills that we passed out of the Science Committee on a bipartisan basis that came to the House floor, none of which received more than 23 votes against them. Then we piled them all together as a suspension and it passed unanimously.

LAMAR ALEXANDER in the Senate did yeoman's work by going to the Senators and getting 70 cosponsors. It passed in the Senate 88-8. Truly this is a bipartisan, bicameral bill.

The reason is, it is a good bill that is going to help manufacturers and businesses, it is going to help workers, it is going to help teachers, it is going to help students, to be able to help America to be in the lead in the world in terms of manufacturing, research, technology and innovation.

Again, I want to tell you how this bill came about. Three years ago, Sherry Boehlert, then the chairman of the Science Committee; LAMAR ALEXANDER, who was chairman of the Science Committee in the Senate; myself and JEFF BINGAMAN, we all asked the National Academies to do a report on the competitiveness of America in the 21st Century. It was a sobering report.

Norm Augustine, the former chairman of Lockheed, Craig Barrett, the chairman of Intel, and several noted scholars and other business individuals came together and said America was on a losing track, which meant that my 6-year-old daughter, many of your children and grandchildren, these two children right here, could be the first generation of Americans to inherit a national standard of living less than their parents, a complete reversal of the American dream. That is why so many of us came together to try to do something.

This is not a Democratic bill. It is not a Republican bill. This simply is a compilation of the recommendations of the report "Rising Above the Gathering Storm."

Let me tell you a little bit about this bill. It really composes three general areas.

The first is they said we have got to lead the world in terms of our science and our research, our innovation. So this bill is an authorization that is going to double over the next 7 years the National Science Foundation, the Office of Science and the Department of Energy, as well as the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

Let me remind you, because I know there are some folks who are going to say this is going to be too much money. This is an authorization. My friend from Tennessee and the other appropriators will determine whether it is going to be too much. We will work together to make that determination. This is a responsible, I think, 7-year increase.

Then they came back to us and they said that American manufacturers and American workers have to work at a higher skill level. There are 7 billion people in the world right now, and half of them make less than \$2 a day. We don't want to compete like that. We can't compete like that. So that means if they are making one widget in India or China, we have got to make 50 widgets here in America. And we need to be not only making the widgets, we need to be inventing the widget maker and manufacturing that widget maker here in this country.

If we are going to do that, then whether you are a high school graduate, a junior college graduate, a college graduate, you have got to work at a higher level, which means you are going to have to have science and math skills.

But the report tells us we are not doing very well in that area. As a matter of fact, right now, only Cyprus and