

McCarter, Jr. as a citizen regent of the Smithsonian for a 6-year term. Mr. McCarter is currently the president and CEO of the Field Museum in Chicago, which is one of our Nation's great cultural institutions.

Mr. McCarter has had a diverse background in government and business in addition to his role in heading one of the Nation's great museums. A native Chicagoan, he previously was senior vice president of Booz Allen & Hamilton, president of DeKalb Corporation, and was budget director of the State of Illinois under Governor Richard B. Ogilvie. He was a White House Fellow during the administration of President Lyndon Johnson.

Mr. McCarter brings a wealth of useful skills to the board. As an experienced museum director, he may prove especially valuable in helping to implement governance reforms at the institution.

Passage of this joint resolution would fill a vacancy on the Smithsonian Board of Regents that has lasted for nearly 1 year. It continues the necessary process of bringing new blood into the Smithsonian Institution. Passage now would allow Mr. McCarter to join the board in time for a vote to appoint a new Secretary, which is expected later this month.

There is still one vacancy remaining among the citizen regents of the Smithsonian. I urge the board to send Congress a recommendation soon, so we can bring it back up to full strength.

I urge approval of the joint resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. EHLERS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I also rise in support of S.J. Res. 25, the appointment of John W. McCarter as a citizen regent of the Smithsonian Institution's Board of Regents.

The previous speaker, the Chair of the House Administration Committee, has pointed out the outstanding record of Mr. McCarter and what he has done. He is the ideal appointee to the board of the Smithsonian.

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Mr. McCarter combines extensive experience as director of the Field Museum, which is a responsibility very similar to that of the Smithsonian Museum, although perhaps on a smaller scale. His experience in the day-to-day operations of the Field Museum will hold him in good stead on the Smithsonian Board. Furthermore, he has considerable experience in the private sector, and that experience will also be most helpful in the operation of the Smithsonian.

Mr. Speaker, we have had some problems with the Smithsonian during the past few years, with both the previous secretary and with some of the enterprises the Smithsonian has engaged in. I would volunteer that Mr. McCarter is precisely the sort of person we need to

straighten out the operations of the Smithsonian, to serve with his unique knowledge in the field of museums, and also his role in business. I believe he is going to make an outstanding addition to this board. I am very confident that we should appoint him, and that he will be a well-qualified, highly capable addition to the board charged with protecting the Nation's Attic, as we fondly call the Smithsonian. I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. 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 Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate joint resolution, S.J. Res. 25.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate joint resolution was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER ACT OF 2008

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5159) to establish the Office of the Capitol Visitor Center within the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, headed by the Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services, to provide for the effective management and administration of the Capitol Visitor Center, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5159

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

### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the “Capitol Visitor Center Act of 2008”.

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

### TITLE I—ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT OF CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER

#### Subtitle A—Description of Facility

Sec. 101. Description and purposes of Capitol Visitor Center.

Sec. 102. Oversight of committees.

Sec. 103. Special rule for certain spaces in the Capitol Visitor Center.

#### Subtitle B—Office of the Capitol Visitor Center; Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services

Sec. 111. Establishment.

Sec. 112. Appointment and supervision of Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services.

Sec. 113. General duties of Chief Executive Officer.

Sec. 114. Acceptance of gifts and volunteer services.

Sec. 115. Special rules regarding certain administrative matters.

### TITLE II—RELATED SERVICES PROVIDED AT CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER

#### Subtitle A—Related Services Described

Sec. 201. Gift shop.

Sec. 202. Food service operations.

Sec. 203. Licenses and other agreements for operations or other functions.

#### Subtitle B—Capitol Visitor Center Revolving Fund

Sec. 211. Establishment; accounts.

Sec. 212. Deposits in the Fund.

Sec. 213. Use of monies.

Sec. 214. Administration of Fund.

### TITLE III—TREATMENT OF CAPITOL GUIDE SERVICE

#### Subtitle A—Transfer to Office of the Capitol Visitor Center

Sec. 301. Transfer of Capitol Guide Service.

Sec. 302. Duties of employees of Capitol Guide Service.

#### Subtitle B—Office of Congressional Accessibility Services

Sec. 311. Establishment of Office of Congressional Accessibility Services.

Sec. 312. Director of Accessibility Services.

Sec. 313. Transfer from Capitol Guide Service.

#### Subtitle C—Technical and Conforming Amendments

Sec. 321. Technical and conforming amendments.

#### Subtitle D—Transfer Date

Sec. 331. Transfer date.

### TITLE IV—GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 401. Authorization of appropriations.

### TITLE I—ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT OF CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER

#### Subtitle A—Description of Facility

#### SEC. 101. DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSES OF CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER.

(a) *TREATMENT AS PART OF CAPITOL.*—In this Act, the “Capitol Visitor Center” is the facility authorized for construction under the heading “Capitol Visitor Center” under chapter 5 of title II of division B of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-277; 112 Stat. 2681-569), and such facility shall be considered to be part of the United States Capitol for all provisions of law in accordance with this Act.

(b) *PURPOSES OF THE FACILITY.*—In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Capitol Visitor Center shall be used to—

(1) provide enhanced security for persons working in or visiting the United States Capitol; and

(2) improve the visitor experience by providing a structure that will afford improved visitor orientation and enhance the educational experience of those who have come to learn about Congress and the Capitol.

(c) *CONFORMING AMENDMENT RELATING TO VISITOR CENTER SPACE IN THE CAPITOL.*—Section 301 of the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968 (2 U.S.C. 2165) is repealed.

#### SEC. 102. OVERSIGHT OF COMMITTEES.

The Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate and the Committee on House Administration of the House of Representatives (hereafter in this Act referred to as the “super-visiting Committees”) shall exercise policy review and oversight over the Capitol Visitor Center.

#### SEC. 103. SPECIAL RULE FOR CERTAIN SPACES IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER.

(a) *SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES EXPANSION SPACE.*—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the Senate and House of Representatives expansion space described as “unassigned space” under the heading “Architect of the Capitol, Capitol Visitor Center” in the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2002 (Public Law 107-68; 115 Stat. 588)—

(1) shall not be treated as part of the Capitol Visitor Center for purposes of this Act; and

(2) shall be treated for purposes of law (including rules of the House of Representatives and Senate)—

(A) in the case of space assigned for the use of the Senate, as part of the Senate wing of the

Capitol and subject to the authority and control of the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate, or

(B) in the case of space assigned for the use of the House, as part of the House of Representatives wing of the Capitol and subject to the authority and control of the Speaker.

(b) TREATMENT OF CONGRESSIONAL AUDITORIUM AND RELATED ADJACENT AREAS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the space in the Capitol Visitor Center known as the Congressional Auditorium, together with each of the areas referred to in paragraph (2), shall be assigned for Congressional use by the Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services under guidelines established by the supervising Committees.

(2) AREAS DESCRIBED.—The areas referred to in this paragraph are as follows, as identified and designated by the Architect of the Capitol on October 1, 2007:

(A) The North Congressional Meeting Room (CVC268) and the South Congressional Meeting Room (CVC217).

(B) The North Pre-function Area (CVC268CR) and the South Pre-function Area (CVC217CR).

(C) Lobbies CVC215 and CVC212.

(D) The North Cloak Room (CVC210) and the South Cloak Room (CVC208).

(E) The Projection Room (CVC209).

(F) The Green Room (CVC207).

(G) The TV Control Room (CVC105).

(H) Offices CVC101, CVC102, CVC103, CVC104, CVC106, CVC204, and CVC205.

**Subtitle B—Office of the Capitol Visitor Center; Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services**

#### SEC. 111. ESTABLISHMENT.

There is established within the Office of the Architect of the Capitol the Office of the Capitol Visitor Center (in this Act referred to as the "Office"), to be headed by the Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services (in this Act referred to as the "Chief Executive Officer").

#### SEC. 112. APPOINTMENT AND SUPERVISION OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR VISITOR SERVICES.

(a) APPOINTMENT.—The Chief Executive Officer shall be appointed by the Architect of the Capitol.

(b) SUPERVISION AND OVERSIGHT.—The Chief Executive Officer shall report directly to the Architect of the Capitol and shall be subject to policy review and oversight by the supervising Committees.

(c) REMOVAL.—Upon removal of the Chief Executive Officer, the Architect of the Capitol shall immediately notify the supervising Committees and the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and Senate, stating the reasons for the removal.

(d) COMPENSATION.—The Chief Executive Officer shall be paid at an annual rate of pay equal to the annual rate of pay of the Deputy Architect of the Capitol and Chief Operating Officer of the Office of the Architect of the Capitol.

(e) TRANSITION FOR CURRENT CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR VISITOR SERVICES.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—The individual who serves as the Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services under section 6701 of the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriation Act of 2007 (2 U.S.C. 1806) as of the date of the enactment of this Act shall be the first Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services appointed by the Architect under this section.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 6701 of the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriation Act of 2007 (2 U.S.C. 1806) is repealed.

#### SEC. 113. GENERAL DUTIES OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.

(a) ADMINISTRATION OF FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND ACTIVITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except to the extent otherwise provided in this Act, the Chief Executive Officer shall be responsible for—

(A) the operation, management, and budget preparation and execution of the Capitol Visitor Center, including all long term planning and day-to-day operational services and activities provided within the Capitol Visitor Center; and

(B) in accordance with subtitle A of title III, the management of guided tours of the interior of the United States Capitol.

(2) INDEPENDENT BUDGET SUBMISSION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The proposed budget for the Office for a fiscal year shall be prepared by the Chief Executive Officer, and shall be included without revision in the proposed budget for the year for the Office of the Architect of the Capitol (as submitted by the Architect of the Capitol to the President).

(B) EXCLUSION OF COSTS OF GENERAL MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF VISITOR CENTER.—In preparing the proposed budget for the Office under subparagraph (A), the Chief Executive Officer shall exclude costs attributable to the activities and services described in section 115(b) (relating to continuing jurisdiction of the Architect of the Capitol for the care and superintendence of the Capitol Visitor Center).

(b) PERSONNEL AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.—

(1) PERSONNEL, DISBURSEMENTS, AND CONTRACTS.—In carrying out this Act, the Chief Executive Officer shall have the authority—

(A) to appoint, hire, and fix the compensation of such personnel as may be necessary for operations of the Office, except that no employee may be paid at an annual rate in excess of the maximum rate payable for level 15 of the General Schedule unless otherwise authorized by law;

(B) to disburse funds as may be necessary and available for the needs of the Office (consistent with the requirements of section 213 in the case of amounts in the Capitol Visitor Center Revolving Fund); and

(C) to designate an employee of the Office to serve as contracting officer for the Office, subject to subsection (c).

(2) TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT OF PERSONNEL.—The Chief Executive Officer shall temporarily assign personnel of the Office based on a request from the Capitol Police Board to assist the United States Capitol Police by providing ushering and informational services, and other services not directly involving law enforcement, in connection with—

(A) the inauguration of the President and Vice President of the United States;

(B) the official reception of representatives of foreign nations and other persons by the Senate or House of Representatives; or

(C) other special or ceremonial occasions in the United States Capitol or on the United States Capitol Grounds that require the presence of additional Government personnel.

(3) AGREEMENTS WITH THE OFFICE OF THE ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL, WITH OTHER LEGISLATIVE BRANCH AGENCIES, AND WITH OFFICES OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—Subject to the approval of the supervising Committees, the Chief Executive Officer may place orders and enter into agreements with the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, with other legislative branch agencies, and with any office or other entity of the Senate or House of Representatives for procuring goods and providing financial and administrative services on behalf of the Office, or to otherwise assist the Chief Executive Officer in the administration and management of the Capitol Visitor Center.

(c) REQUIRING APPROVAL OF CERTAIN CONTRACTS.—The Chief Executive Officer may not enter into a contract for which the amount involved exceeds \$250,000 without the prior approval of the supervising Committees.

(d) SEMIANNUAL REPORTS.—The Chief Executive Officer shall submit a report to the supervising Committees not later than 45 days fol-

lowing the close of each semiannual period ending on June 30 or December 31 of each year on the financial and operational status during the period of each function under the jurisdiction of the Chief Executive Officer. Each such report shall include financial statements and a description or explanation of current operations, the implementation of new policies and procedures, and future plans for each function.

#### SEC. 114. ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS AND VOLUNTEER SERVICES.

(a) ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT AND USE GIFTS.—The Chief Executive Officer, with the approval of the supervising Committees, is authorized to receive, accept, and hold unrestricted gifts of money on behalf of the Capitol Visitor Center, and to use the gifts for the benefit of the Capitol Visitor Center.

(2) ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS OF WORKS OF ART AND OTHER RELATED OBJECTS BY OTHER LEGISLATIVE BRANCH ENTITIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a gift consisting of a work of art, historical object, or exhibit for which the authority to accept the gift for display in the Capitol is provided to an entity referred to in subparagraph (B), the entity shall have the authority to accept the gift for display in the Capitol Visitor Center in accordance with the authority provided under applicable law.

(B) ENTITIES DESCRIBED.—The entities referred to in this subparagraph are as follows:

(i) The Joint Committee on the Library under section 1831 of the Revised Statutes of the United States (2 U.S.C. 2133).

(ii) The United States Capitol Preservation Commission under section 801 of the Arizona-Idaho Conservation Act of 1988 (2 U.S.C. 2081).

(iii) The House of Representatives Fine Arts Board under section 1000 of the Arizona-Idaho Conservation Act of 1988 (2 U.S.C. 2121).

(iv) The Senate Commission on Art under section 1 of Senate Resolution 382, Ninetieth Congress, agreed to October 1, 1968 and enacted into law by section 901(a) of Public Law 100-690 (2 U.S.C. 2101).

(3) ANNUAL REPORT ON GIFTS ACCEPTED.—Each semiannual report submitted under section 113(d) shall include a description of each accepted by the Chief Executive Officer under this subsection during the period covered by the report.

(b) ACCEPTANCE OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES.—Notwithstanding section 1342 of title 31, United States Code, the Chief Executive Officer may accept and use voluntary and uncompensated services for the Capitol Visitor Center as the Chief Executive Officer determines necessary. No person shall be permitted to donate his or her personal services under this section unless such person has first agreed, in writing, to waive any and all claims against the United States arising out of or connection with such services, other than a claim under the provisions of chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code. No person donating personal services under this section shall be considered an employee of the United States for any purpose other than for purposes of chapter 81 of such title. In no case shall the acceptance of personal services under this subsection result in the reduction of pay or displacement of any employee of the Office.

#### SEC. 115. SPECIAL RULES REGARDING CERTAIN ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS.

(a) SPECIAL RULES REGARDING SECURITY.—

(1) SECURITY JURISDICTION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES UNAFFECTED.—Nothing in this Act granting any authority to the Chief Executive Officer shall be construed to affect the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States Capitol Police, the Capitol Police Board, the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate, and the Sergeant at Arms of the House of Representatives to provide security for the Capitol Visitor Center.

(2) ATTENDANCE OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT CERTAIN MEETINGS OF CAPITOL POLICE

**BOARD.**—At the request of the Capitol Police Board, the Chief Executive Officer shall attend any portion of any meeting of the Capitol Police Board during which the Board considers issues relating to the security of the Capitol Visitor Center, including activities described in paragraph (3), or other issues relating to services provided by employees of the Office.

(3) **CONSULTATION WITH CAPITOL POLICE BOARD ON SECURITY MATTERS.**—The Office shall consult with the Capitol Police Board in carrying out any activity which affects the security of the Capitol Visitor Center or any other part of the Capitol, including activities relating to the hours of operation, tour routes and the number of visitors per tour guide, and other activities relating to the entry of members of the general public into the Capitol and the movement of members of the general public within the Capitol.

(4) **PLAN FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR EMPLOYEES.**—The Chief Executive Officer, in coordination with the Chief of the Capitol Police, shall develop plans and procedures for conducting criminal history background checks on employees of the Office and individuals seeking employment with the Office (including employees of the Capitol Guide Service who are transferred to the Office under title III).

(b) **SPECIAL RULES REGARDING CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES.**—

(1) **ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL JURISDICTION UNAFFECTED.**—Nothing in this Act granting any authority to the Chief Executive Officer (including section 114) shall be construed to affect the exclusive jurisdiction of the Architect of the Capitol for the care and superintendence of the Capitol Visitor Center or any other part of the Capitol, and all maintenance services, groundskeeping services, improvements, alterations, additions, and repairs for the Capitol Visitor Center shall be carried out pursuant to the direction and supervision of the Architect subject to the oversight of Congress under applicable law (including rules of the House of Representatives and Senate).

(2) **BUDGET SUBMISSION.**—The Architect of the Capitol shall submit with the annual budget for the Office of the Architect of the Capitol for a fiscal year a separate, detailed statement of the costs anticipated to be incurred during the year for the activities and services described in paragraph (1) which are excluded from the annual budget for the Office which is submitted by the Chief Executive Officer under section 113(a)(2).

(c) **SPECIAL RULE REGARDING EXHIBITS AND TOURS.**—The Chief Executive Officer shall consider comments and recommendations from the Clerk of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate regarding the content of exhibits contained in and tours operated out of the Capitol Visitor Center.

## **TITLE II—RELATED SERVICES PROVIDED AT CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER**

### **Subtitle A—Related Services Described**

#### **SEC. 201. GIFT SHOP.**

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—In consultation with the supervising Committees, the Chief Executive Officer shall establish a gift shop within the Capitol Visitor Center for the purpose of providing for the sale of gift items.

(b) **EXCEPTION TO PROHIBITION OF SALE OR SOLICITATION ON CAPITOL GROUNDS.**—Section 5104(c) of title 40, United States Code, shall not apply to any activity carried out under this subsection.

#### **SEC. 202. FOOD SERVICE OPERATIONS.**

(a) **RESTAURANT, CATERING, AND VENDING.**—The Chief Executive Officer is authorized to establish within the Capitol Visitor Center a restaurant and other food service facilities, including catering services and vending machines.

(b) **USE OF CONTRACT TO CARRY OUT FOOD SERVICE OPERATIONS.**—The Chief Executive Officer shall carry out all food service operations within the Capitol Visitor Center pursuant to a contract entered into with a private vendor.

(c) **EXCEPTION TO PROHIBITION OF SALE OR SOLICITATION ON CAPITOL GROUNDS.**—Section 5104(c) of title 40, United States Code, shall not apply to any activity carried out under this subsection.

#### **SEC. 203. LICENSES AND OTHER AGREEMENTS FOR OPERATIONS OR OTHER FUNCTIONS.**

(a) **AUTHORITY.**—The Chief Executive Officer is authorized—

(1) subject to the approval of the supervising Committees, to enter into licenses and other agreements to allow operations or other functions to occur within the Capitol Visitor Center; and

(2) to assess and collect charges or other fees as may be appropriate under such licenses and agreements, including the recoupment of costs associated with the operation or function being held.

(b) **EXCEPTION TO PROHIBITION OF SALE OR SOLICITATION ON CAPITOL GROUNDS.**—To the extent that a license or agreement entered into by the Chief Executive Officer under this section permits any person to sell or solicit the sale of goods or services within the Capitol Visitor Center, section 5104(c) of title 40, United States Code, shall not apply to the sale or solicitation of sales of such goods or services.

(c) **APPROVAL OF CONGRESS REQUIRED FOR CERTAIN EVENTS.**—No event intended for purposes other than those described in section 101(b) shall be held in the central hall of the Capitol Visitor Center unless authorized by a resolution agreed to by both houses of the Congress.

### **Subtitle B—Capitol Visitor Center Revolving Fund**

#### **SEC. 211. ESTABLISHMENT; ACCOUNTS.**

There is established in the Treasury of the United States a revolving fund to be known as the Capitol Visitor Center Revolving Fund (in this section referred to as the “Fund”), consisting of the following individual accounts:

(1) The Gift Shop Account.

(2) The Miscellaneous Receipts Account.

#### **SEC. 212. DEPOSITS IN THE FUND.**

(a) **GIFT SHOP ACCOUNT.**—There shall be deposited in the Gift Shop Account all monies received from sales and other services by the gift shop established under section 201, together with any interest accrued on balances in the Account.

(b) **MISCELLANEOUS RECEIPTS ACCOUNT.**—There shall be deposited in the Miscellaneous Receipts Account each of the following (together with any interest accrued on balances in the Account):

(1) Any gifts of money accepted under section 114(a).

(2) Any net profits or commissions paid to the Capitol Visitor Center under any contract for food service operations entered into under section 202(b).

(3) Any charges or fees collected from the operations or other functions within the Capitol Visitor Center under licenses or other arrangements entered into under section 203(a).

(4) Any other receipts received from the operation of the Capitol Visitor Center

#### **SEC. 213. USE OF MONIES.**

(a) **GIFT SHOP ACCOUNT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—All monies in the Gift Shop Account shall be available without fiscal year limitation for obligation by the Chief Executive Officer in connection with the operation of the gift shops under section 201(a), including supplies, inventories, equipment, and other expenses. In addition, such monies may be used by the Chief Executive Officer to reimburse any applicable appropriations account for amounts used from such appropriations account to pay the salaries of employees of the gift shops.

(2) **OBLIGATION OF FUNDS REMAINING AFTER USE OF FUNDS FOR GIFT SHOP.**—To the extent monies in the Gift Shop Account are available after disbursements and reimbursements are

made under subparagraph (A), the Chief Executive Officer may obligate such monies for the operation of the Capitol Visitor Center, after consultation with—

(A) the supervising Committees; and

(B) the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and Senate.

(b) **MISCELLANEOUS RECEIPTS ACCOUNT.**—All monies in the Miscellaneous Receipts Account shall be available without fiscal year limitation for obligation by the Chief Executive Officer for the operations of the Capitol Visitor Center, after consultation with—

(1) the supervising Committees; and

(2) the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and Senate.

#### **SEC. 214. ADMINISTRATION OF FUND.**

(a) **OBLIGATIONS.**—Obligations from the Fund may be made by the Chief Executive Officer.

(b) **INVESTMENT AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary of the Treasury shall invest any portion of the Fund that, as determined by the Chief Executive Officer, is not required to meet current expenses. Each investment shall be made in an interest-bearing obligation of the United States or an obligation guaranteed both as to principal and interest by the United States that, as determined by the Chief Executive Officer, has a maturity date suitable for the purposes of the Fund. The Secretary of the Treasury shall credit interest earned on the obligations to the Fund.

(c) **AUDIT.**—The Fund shall be subject to audit by the Comptroller General at the discretion of the Comptroller General.

## **TITLE III—TREATMENT OF CAPITOL GUIDE SERVICE**

### **Subtitle A—Transfer to Office of the Capitol Visitor Center**

#### **SEC. 301. TRANSFER OF CAPITOL GUIDE SERVICE.**

(a) **TRANSFER OF AUTHORITIES AND PERSONNEL TO OFFICE OF THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER.**—Except as provided in subsection (c), effective on the transfer date—

(1) the contracts, liabilities, records, property, and other assets and interests of the Capitol Guide Service, established pursuant to section 441 of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 (2 U.S.C. 2166), and the employees of the Capitol Guide Service, are transferred to the Office, except that the transfer of any amounts appropriated to the Capitol Guide Service that remain available as of the transfer date shall occur only upon the approval of the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and Senate; and

(2) the Capitol Guide Service shall be subject to the direction, supervision, and control of the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with this subtitle.

(b) **TREATMENT OF EMPLOYEES OF CAPITOL GUIDE SERVICE AT TIME OF TRANSFER.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Any individual who is an employee of the Capitol Guide Service on a permanent basis on the transfer date who is transferred to the Office under subsection (a) shall be subject to authority of the Chief Executive Officer under section 302(b), except that the individual shall not be reduced in grade, compensation, rate of leave, or other benefits that apply with respect to the individual at the time of transfer while such individual remains continuously so employed as a Capitol Guide within the Office, other than for cause.

(2) **ELIGIBILITY FOR IMMEDIATE RETIREMENT ON BASIS OF INVOLUNTARY SEPARATION.**—For purposes of section 8336(d) and section 8414(b) of title 5, United States Code, an individual described in paragraph (1) who is separated from service with the Office shall be considered to have separated from the service involuntarily if, at the time the individual is separated from service—

(A) the individual has completed 25 years of service under such title; or

(B) the individual has completed 20 years of service under such title and is 50 years of age or older.

(3) **CONTINUATION OF PARTICIPATION IN STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if an individual described in paragraph (1) has a written service agreement in effect under section 102 of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2002 (2 U.S.C. 60c-5) at the time the individual is transferred to the Office, the agreement shall remain in effect in accordance with the terms and conditions applicable to the agreement at the time the individual is transferred (including the provisions of such section permitting the individual to enter into additional service agreements for successive 1-year periods of employment), except that in applying such section to the individual, the following shall apply:

(A) The Office shall serve as the employing office, and the Chief Executive Officer shall serve as the head of the employing office.

(B) The Architect of the Capitol shall carry out the responsibilities of the Secretary of the Senate.

(C) Any reference to the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate shall be treated as a reference to the supervising Committees.

(D) If the individual is required to make any reimbursement under such section with respect to payments made after the individual is transferred, the individual shall reimburse the Office of the Architect of the Capitol.

(4) **PROHIBITING IMPOSITION OF PROBATIONARY PERIOD.**—The Chief Executive Officer may not impose a period of probation with respect to the transfer of any individual who is transferred to the Office under subsection (a).

(c) **EXCEPTION FOR CONGRESSIONAL SPECIAL SERVICES OFFICE.**—This section does not apply with respect to any employees, contracts, liabilities, records, property, and other assets and interests of the Congressional Special Services Office of the Capitol Guide Service that are transferred to the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services under subtitle B.

#### **SEC. 302. DUTIES OF EMPLOYEES OF CAPITOL GUIDE SERVICE.**

(a) **PROVISION OF GUIDED TOURS.**—

(1) **TOURS.**—In accordance with this section, the Capitol Guide Service shall provide guided tours of the interior of the United States Capitol without charge, including the Capitol Visitor Center, for the education and enlightenment of the general public.

(2) **ACCEPTANCE OF FEES PROHIBITED.**—An employee of the Capitol Guide Service shall not charge or accept any fee, or accept any gratuity, for or on account of his official services.

(3) **REGULATIONS OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.**—All such tours shall be conducted in compliance with regulations approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

(b) **AUTHORITY OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.**—In providing for the direction, supervision, and control of the Capitol Guide Service, the Chief Executive Officer is authorized—

(1) subject to the availability of appropriations, to establish and revise such number of positions of Guide in the Capitol Guide Service as the Chief Executive Officer considers necessary to carry out effectively the activities of the Capitol Guide Service;

(2) to appoint, on a permanent basis without regard to political affiliation and solely on the basis of fitness to perform their duties, a Chief Guide and such deputies as the Chief Executive Officer considers appropriate for the effective administration of the Capitol Guide Service and, in addition, such number of Guides as may be authorized;

(3) with the approval of the supervising Committees, with respect to the individuals appointed pursuant to paragraph (2)—

(A) to prescribe the individual's duties and responsibilities,

(B) to fix, and adjust from time to time, respective rates of pay at single per annum (gross) rates, and

(C) to take appropriate disciplinary action, including, when circumstances warrant, suspension from duty without pay, reduction in pay, demotion, or termination of employment with the Capitol Guide Service, against any employee who violates any provision of this section or any regulation prescribed by the Chief Executive Officer pursuant to paragraph (7);

(4) to prescribe a uniform dress, including appropriate insignia, which shall be worn by personnel of the Capitol Guide Service;

(5) from time to time and as may be necessary, to procure and furnish such uniforms to such personnel without charge to such personnel;

(6) to receive and consider advice and information from any private historical or educational organization, association, or society with respect to those operations of the Capitol Guide Service which involve the furnishing of historical and educational information to the general public; and

(7) with the approval of the supervising Committees, to prescribe such regulations as the Chief Executive Officer considers necessary and appropriate for the operation of the Capitol Guide Service, including regulations with respect to tour routes and hours of operation, number of visitors per guide, staff-led tours, and non-law enforcement security and special event related support.

(c) **PROVISION OF ACCESSIBLE TOURS IN COORDINATION WITH OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES.**—The Chief Executive Officer shall coordinate the provision of accessible tours for individuals with disabilities with the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services established under subtitle B.

#### **Subtitle B—Office of Congressional Accessibility Services**

#### **SEC. 311. ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES.**

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established in the legislative branch the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services, to be headed by the Director of Accessibility Services.

(b) **SUPERVISION AND CONTROL.**—The Office of Congressional Accessibility Services shall be subject to the direction, supervision, and control of the Capitol Police Board.

(c) **MISSION AND FUNCTIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Office of Congressional Accessibility Services shall—

(A) provide and coordinate accessibility services for individuals with disabilities, including Members of Congress, employees of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and visitors, in the United States Capitol Complex; and

(B) in consultation with the Office of House Employment Counsel and the Senate Chief Counsel for Employment, provide information regarding accessibility for individuals with disabilities, as well as related training and staff development, to Members of Congress and employees of the House of Representatives and Senate.

(2) **SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS.**—The Director of Accessibility Services shall submit to the supervising Committees a list of the specific functions that the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services will perform in carrying out this subtitle with the approval of the supervising committees. The Director of Accessibility Services shall submit the list not later than 30 days after the transfer date.

(3) **NO EFFECT ON AUTHORITY OF EMPLOYMENT COUNSELS.**—Nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to limit any authority or function of the Office of House Employment Counsel or the Senate Chief Counsel for Employment that such Office or Counsel carries out prior to the transfer date.

(4) **UNITED STATES CAPITOL COMPLEX DEFINED.**—In this subsection, the term "United States Capitol Complex" means the Capitol buildings (as defined in section 5101 of title 40, United States Code) and the United States Cap-

itol Grounds (as described in section 5102 of such title).

(d) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 310 of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 1990 (2 U.S.C. 130e) is repealed.

#### **SEC. 312. DIRECTOR OF ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES.**

(a) **APPOINTMENT AND REMOVAL; COMPENSATION.**—

(1) **APPOINTMENT.**—The Director of Accessibility Services shall be appointed by the Capitol Police Board.

(2) **REMOVAL.**—The Director of Accessibility Services may be removed by the Capitol Police Board, upon notification to the supervising Committees.

(3) **COMPENSATION.**—The Director of Accessibility Services shall be paid at an annual rate of pay determined by the Capitol Police Board, except that such rate may not exceed the maximum rate payable for level 15 of the General Schedule.

(4) **TRANSITION FOR CURRENT HEAD OF CONGRESSIONAL SPECIAL SERVICES OFFICE OF CAPITOL GUIDE SERVICE.**—The individual serving as the head of the Congressional Special Services Office of the Capitol Guide Service as of the transfer date shall be appointed by the Capitol Police Board as the first Director of Accessibility Services under this subtitle.

(b) **PERSONNEL AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS.**—

(1) **PERSONNEL, DISBURSEMENTS, AND CONTRACTS.**—In carrying out the functions of the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services under section 311, the Director of Accessibility Services shall have the authority—

(A) to appoint, hire, and fix the compensation of such personnel as may be necessary for operations of the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services, except that no employee may be paid at an annual rate in excess of the annual rate of pay for the Director of Accessibility Services;

(B) to disburse funds as may be necessary and available for the needs of the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services; and

(C) to serve as contracting officer for the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services.

(2) **AGREEMENTS WITH THE OFFICE OF THE ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL, WITH OTHER LEGISLATIVE BRANCH AGENCIES, AND WITH OFFICES OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.**—Subject to the approval of the supervising Committees, the Director of Accessibility Services may place orders and enter into agreements with the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, with other legislative branch agencies, and with any office or other entity of the Senate or House of Representatives for procuring goods and providing financial and administrative services on behalf of the Office of Accessibility Services, or to otherwise assist the Director in the administration and management of the Office of Accessibility Services.

(c) **SEMIANNUAL REPORTS.**—The Director of Accessibility Services shall submit a report to the supervising Committees not later than 45 days following the close of each semiannual period ending on June 30 or December 31 of each year on the financial and operational status during the period of each function under the jurisdiction of the Director. Each such report shall include financial statements and a description or explanation of current operations, the implementation of new policies and procedures, and future plans for each function.

#### **SEC. 313. TRANSFER FROM CAPITOL GUIDE SERVICE.**

(a) **TRANSFER OF AUTHORITIES AND PERSONNEL OF CONGRESSIONAL SPECIAL SERVICES OFFICE OF CAPITOL GUIDE SERVICE.**—In accordance with the provisions of this subtitle, effective on the transfer date—

(1) the contracts, liabilities, records, property, and other assets and interests of the Congressional Special Services Office of the Capitol

Guide Service, and the employees of such Office, are transferred to the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services established under section 311(a), except that the transfer of any amounts appropriated to the Congressional Special Services Office that remain available as of the transfer date shall occur only upon the approval of the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and Senate; and

(2) the employees of such Office shall be subject to the direction, supervision, and control of the Director of Accessibility Services.

(b) TREATMENT OF EMPLOYEES AT TIME OF TRANSFER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Any individual who is an employee of the Congressional Special Services Office of the Capitol Guide Service on a permanent basis on the transfer date who is transferred under subsection (a) shall be subject to authority of the Director of Accessibility Services under section 312, except that the individual shall not be reduced in grade, compensation, rate of leave, or other benefits that apply with respect to the individual at the time of transfer while such individual remains continuously so employed within the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services established under section 311(a), other than for cause.

(2) ELIGIBILITY FOR IMMEDIATE RETIREMENT ON BASIS OF INVOLUNTARY SEPARATION.—For purposes of section 8336(d) and section 8414(b) of title 5, United States Code, an individual described in paragraph (1) who is separated from service with the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services shall be considered to have separated from the service involuntarily if, at the time the individual is separated from service—

(A) the individual has completed 25 years of service under such title; or

(B) the individual has completed 20 years of service under such title and is 50 years of age or older.

(3) PROHIBITING IMPOSITION OF PROBATIONARY PERIOD.—The Director of Accessibility Services may not impose a period of probation with respect to the transfer of any individual who is transferred to the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services under subsection (a).

#### Subtitle C—Technical and Conforming Amendments

#### SEC. 321. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) EXISTING AUTHORITY OF CAPITOL GUIDE SERVICE.—Section 441 of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 (2 U.S.C. 2166) is repealed.

(b) COVERAGE UNDER CONGRESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1995.—

(1) TREATMENT OF EMPLOYEES AS COVERED EMPLOYEES.—Section 101(3)(C) of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1301(3)(C)) is amended to read as follows:

“(C) the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services.”

(2) TREATMENT OF OFFICE AS EMPLOYING OFFICE.—Section 101(9)(D) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 1301(9)(D)) is amended by striking “the Capitol Guide Board,” and inserting “the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services.”

(3) RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS RELATING TO PUBLIC SERVICES AND ACCOMMODATIONS.—Section 210(a)(4) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 1331(a)(4)) is amended to read as follows:

“(4) the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services.”

(4) PERIODIC INSPECTIONS FOR OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH COMPLIANCE.—Section 215(e)(1) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 1341(e)(1)) is amended by striking “the Capitol Guide Service,” and inserting “the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services.”

(c) TREATMENT AS CONGRESSIONAL EMPLOYEES FOR RETIREMENT PURPOSES.—Section 2107(9) of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(9) an employee of the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services.”

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the transfer date.

#### Subtitle D—Transfer Date

#### SEC. 331. TRANSFER DATE.

In this title, the “transfer date” means the date on which the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Architect of the Capitol, certifies that a certificate of occupancy for the Capitol Visitor Center has been issued by the appropriate authorities.

#### TITLE IV—GENERAL PROVISIONS

#### SEC. 401. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks in the RECORD on H.R. 5159.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the legislation that I bring to the floor today is the end result of a long journey that goes back to the 104th Congress, when the Capitol Visitor Center, or the CVC, was first debated. Bills were introduced and none were passed. After the 1998 entry by a gunman into the Capitol and shooting of two Capitol police officers, money was appropriated in the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for fiscal year 1999 for the planning, construction, and design of the CVC.

While that bill provided for the bricks and mortar of the CVC, H.R. 5159, the Capitol Visitor Center Act of 2008 is the administrative blueprint or framework for the day-to-day operation and management oversight of the CVC.

H.R. 5159 defines the duties, responsibilities, and roles for a variety of administrative offices such as the Chief Executive Officer of Visitor Services, Office of the Capitol Visitor Center, and the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services. The bill also provides for visitor center services, restaurants, and the gift shop.

This bill does not affect or change staff-led tours in any way.

H.R. 5159 is a bipartisan initiative that received unanimous support and was reported out favorably with an amendment from the Committee on House Administration. I would like to take this time to thank my colleague and cosponsor, the ranking member, Mr. EHLERS, for his assistance and cooperation.

H.R. 5159 will be the first bill by the House to deal with the internal operations and organization of the CVC. H.R. 5159 is a necessary instrument to ensure that the CVC will be able to carry out its main objectives: security, visitor education and comfort. I urge

my colleagues to support this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I also rise in support of H.R. 5159, which establishes an Office of the Capitol Visitor Center under the organization of the Architect of the Capitol.

As the Chair of the committee has pointed out, this has been a long progress, probably longer than it needed to be, but it started at the time I was the Chair of the committee. Unfortunately, the original ideas which we advanced were not accepted by all parties involved, and it has taken a considerable amount of effort to reach the point we are at today. However, what we have today is a good suggestion, a good document, a good organization, and I am very pleased with it, largely because it is very similar to what we started out with more than a year ago.

This new Office of the Capitol Visitor Center will be headed by the newly appointed Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services, Terrie Rouse. Ms. Rouse has done a superb job in bringing together her management team to make sure that the Capitol Visitor Center is fully operational and prepared to receive visitors as soon as the building is ready to be occupied.

The legislation we are considering today provides a framework for the effective management and administration of the CVC, while at the same time ensuring that Members of the House and Senate have a definitive role to play in governing the operation of the CVC.

This marvelous building, which will be enjoyed by Americans for years to come, will operate in a way that, with this structure, will serve greatly to strengthen the safety and security of the Members, staff, and visitors to the Capitol, but above all, will create an unparalleled visitor experience for the millions of Americans who visit their Nation's Capitol each year.

In addition to being a significant administrative step in the operations of the CVC, this bill is also an important milestone as we move closer toward the facility's opening. In just a few short months, at least we hope they are a few short months, the first visitors to the CVC will have an opportunity to experience the majestic displays that highlight significant accomplishments made by the legislative branch that contributed to the development of our Nation's rich history. Though some visitors may be hundreds or even thousands of miles from home, they will remain connected through interactive kiosks that feature biographical data about their Member of Congress, and they will learn how to contact their Member.

For those Members who have not yet had an opportunity to tour the CVC, or for Members who took a CVC tour several months ago, I urge all those Members to take the time to take a new tour of the facility in its current state so that each and every Member may



experience the facility as it will appear to our constituents.

As we complete the final steps before the facility opens, I thank Chairman BRADY for his leadership in bringing this important legislation to the floor. As I said earlier, this bill has a unique history with considerable difficulties, and I commend Chairman BRADY for managing to steer this bill through the pitfalls and rapids that often encumber bills, and he has presented an excellent bill to this Congress.

This bill will ensure effective management and administration of the Capitol Visitor Center with oversight by the Committee on House Administration and the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration. I look forward to continuing to work closely with Chairman BRADY as we continue our oversight activities over the Capitol Visitor Center, and as we near its November 2008 opening date and far, far beyond. I once again thank the chairman for his good work on this bill.

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

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for all of his cooperation on a day-to-day basis, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5159, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT MEMBERS' CONGRESSIONAL PAPERS SHOULD BE PROPERLY MAINTAINED

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 307) expressing the sense of Congress that Members' Congressional papers should be properly maintained and encouraging Members to take all necessary measures to manage and preserve these papers.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

##### H. CON. RES. 307

Whereas Members' Congressional papers (including papers of Delegates and Resident Commissioners to the Congress) serve as indispensable sources for the study of American representative democracy;

Whereas these papers document vital national, regional, and local public policy issues;

Whereas these papers are crucial to the public's understanding of the role of Congress in making the Nation's laws and responding to the needs of its citizens;

Whereas because these papers serve as essential primary sources for the history of

Congress, the study of these papers will illuminate the careers of individual Members;

Whereas by custom, these papers are considered the personal property of the Member who receives and creates them, and it is therefore the Member who is responsible to decide on their ultimate disposition; and

Whereas resources are available through the Office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate to assist Members with the professional and cost-effective management and preservation of these papers: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—*

(1) Members' Congressional papers (including papers of Delegates and Resident Commissioners to the Congress) should be properly maintained;

(2) each Member of Congress should take all necessary measures to manage and preserve the Member's own Congressional papers; and

(3) each Member of Congress should be encouraged to arrange for the deposit or donation of the Member's own noncurrent Congressional papers with a research institution that is properly equipped to care for them, and to make these papers available for educational purposes at a time the Member considers appropriate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks in the RECORD on H. Con. Res. 307.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is very easy for Members to get caught up in the day-to-day responsibilities of their job. In between regular correspondence, speeches, and vote recommendations, Members accumulate a lot of paper. Most will not give consideration to the importance of this paper until the end or middle of their careers.

The papers generated by Members while in office reflect the issues of the day and are of historical benefit to students, scholars, and citizens in understanding the role of the House of Representatives in the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, H. Con. Res. 307 is a concurrent resolution that reminds Members of the importance of maintaining and archiving their papers so that future leaders and citizens of history may learn and understand the decisions that we have made. I urge passage of H. Con. Res. 307.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 307, which expresses the sense of the Congress that congressional papers should be properly maintained and encourages Members to take all necessary measures to manage and preserve these papers.

This is a very important issue, and one that I am also delinquent on, as I suspect most Members are. At various times I have encouraged my staff to be certain that we take proper care of papers, that we maintain them, and that they are available for archiving once we leave office. But yet, it is a very difficult task to do this on a day-to-day basis and remember to do it.

Let me also bemoan the fact that the executive branch has been subjected to lawsuits on this issue, and the courts have declared they must save every little piece of paper, every message, and they are open to scrutiny and subpoena at any time in the future. The net effect of this is that the White House puts hardly anything down on paper, a practice that was developed in the previous administration as well. That is unfortunate. We should have the freedom to express our thoughts freely and make certain that they are preserved in a fashion that prevents them from being used improperly in future times.

As Members of Congress, we are routinely faced with an abundance of notes, letters, and other papers that cross our desk each day. For each of us, there is a temptation to rid ourselves of today's notes and papers and begin each day anew, free from the scourge of clutter. And I know my office certainly should be more free of clutter. It would be easiest to discard these items along with rest of the day's castoffs, but as history has shown us, it is often these mundane items that have painted the most accurate and detailed picture of our Nation's history.

These papers and their contents separately may tell us very little about the place and time in which they were created, but they are threads that, when woven together, create the fabric of our democracy.

While congressional papers are the property and responsibility of the Member, the Clerk of the House and the Secretary of the Senate stand ready to assist Members of Congress in the disposition and handling of these materials. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in the effort to retain congressional documents, and in doing so, preserve a piece of history for the sake of our individual and collective posterity.

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

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. I thank the ranking member, Mr. EHLERS, for your cooperation. It is a pleasure working with you from day to day.

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 Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY) that the House suspend the