lives of two heroes, Jacob Joseph Chestnut and John Gibson, who were killed in the line of duty when a deranged gunman stormed this very building. Their deaths are a stark reminder of the great peril that Capitol Police officers face each day. With the terrorist attacks of 9/11 came new threats and heightened awareness that there are those for whom destruction of the Capitol and its inhabitants would be cause for celebration.

This sobering reality is one that the Capitol Police must live with each day. Yet even with the burden they carry, the Capitol Police greet members, staff, and visitors alike with a welcome demeanor and reassuring presence. They are often the first face we see when we a arrive at the beginning of the day and the last person we say goodnight to as we leave. This resolution serves as a tribute to each of those men and women who bravely stand between us and those who would do us harm.

For these reasons I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 645.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART), the sponsor of the resolution.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I want to first thank the ranking member and the chairman for bringing this resolution forward.

All of us in this great body are fortunate to have great police officers in our home districts, in our home communities, in our hometowns. Our local police departments keep our communities and our families safe, and all of us greatly appreciate their hard work and their sacrifice.

But we must also always recognize and always remember the officers who keep this Capitol community safe. Nearly 3 million tourists from across the country and across the globe visit this Capitol every single year. The Capitol Police keep the Capitol complex safe and secure for our constituents, for our staffs, for our families, and for all of us who have the privilege to work here every day. And among their stated mission is to protect and support the Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities, and they do so every single day with great courage, with great courtesy, with great dignity.

The United States Capitol Police are on the front lines of the war on terrorism as well, and they remain on constant alert against multiple threats to the Capitol complex and all of those who work and visit this complex.

Unfortunately, as we have already heard before, tomorrow marks the 10th anniversary of the deaths of Officer Jacob Chestnut and Detective John Gibson, who lost their lives protecting the Capitol and other people inside from an armed attacker. This is a very solemn reminder, Madam Speaker, of the dangers that the Capitol Police face on a regular basis on our behalf. I call on this body to express its gratitude and appreciation to their professionalism and all of the officers as we remember the horrible events of 10 years ago. These officers put their lives on the line and, unfortunately, paid the ultimate price. We could not do our jobs effectively without them.

So as the chairman said, let's not only support this resolution and thank the Capitol Police today. Every single day that we are here, let's remember the job that they do for all of us, for our country. Let's thank them. Let's appreciate them.

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

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, once again I thank the gentleman from Florida for introducing this resolution. I also thank the Capitol Police for the fine job they perform for us every day of the year, making our work in Congress possible.

It's great that we offer a resolution today commending them, and it's sad that we have to have a 10-year anniversary tomorrow for the two police officers who made the ultimate sacrifice.

I think the most befitting thing we can do for them and for our police officers is to say hello to them, say ''How are you? How's your day?'' instead of running by them for a vote, running out, leaving, going to our offices. They're people, too. They're great men and women. They do a great job. We do thank them for their job. But we should take a moment or two to have a little conversation with them and let them know, not only one day a year, not today, not tomorrow, but every time we pass by them, to thank them for keeping us safe.

We walk in this building through metal detectors, dogs. They check our cars and we're safe as can be and we're safe as can be because of them. When there's a problem and we have to evacuate, we're running out and they're running in. We ought to let them know every single day that we appreciate them.

With that, I urge an ''aye'' vote.

Madam 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 agree to the resolution, H. Res. 645, as amended.

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

The title was amended so as to read: ''A resolution expressing the gratitude and appreciation of the House of Representatives to the professionalism and dedication of the United States Capitol Police as the House honors the 10th Anniversary of the tragic deaths of Officer Jacob Chestnut and Detective John Gibson, who lost their lives protecting the Capitol and the people inside from an armed attack''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING THE PRINTING OF AN ADDITIONAL NUMBER OF COPIES OF THE 23RD EDITION OF THE POCKET VERSION OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to discharge the Committee on House Administration from further consideration of House Concurrent Resolution 395 and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 395

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZING PRINTING OF ADDITIONAL NUMBER OF COPIES OF POCKET VERSION OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION.

Under the direction of the Joint Committee on Printing, there shall be printed an additional number of copies of the 23rd edition of the pocket version of the United States Constitution (House Document 110—51) equal to the lesser of—

(1) 550,000 copies, of which 440,000 copies shall be for the use of the House of Representatives, 100,000 copies shall be for the use of the Senate, and 10,000 copies shall be for the use of the Joint Committee on Printing; or

(2) such number of copies as does not exceed a total production and printing cost of $180,949, with distribution to be allocated in the same proportion as described in paragraph (1), except that in no case shall the number of copies be less than 1 per Member of Congress.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1145

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO HOUSE AMENDMENTS TO SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 3221, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACT OF 2008

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1363 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1363

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 3221) to provide needed housing reform and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment to the

House amendments to the Senate amendment thereto, and to consider in the House, without intervention of any point of order, a motion offered by the chairman of the Committee on Financial Services or his designee that the House concur in the Senate amendment to the House amendment numbered 1 with the amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. The Senate amendment and the motion shall be considered as read. The motion shall be debatable for two hours, with 80 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services and 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of the motion specified in the first section of this resolution, the House shall be considered to have receded from any remaining amendments or disagreements.

SEC. 3. During consideration of the motion to concur pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the motion to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support. For the purpose of debate only, I will yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CASTOR. I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 1363.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. CASTOR. I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Madam Speaker, House Resolution 1363 provides for consideration of the Senate amendment to H.R. 3221, the American Housing Rescue and Foreclosure Prevention Act of 2008. The rule makes in order a motion by the chairman of the Committee on Financial Services to concur in the Senate amendment, with the text of the House amendment printed in the Rules Committee report.

The rule provides 2 hours of debate on the motion, with 80 minutes controlled by the Committee on Financial Services, and 40 minutes controlled by the Committee on Ways and Means.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the American Housing Rescue and Foreclosure Prevention Act and this rule. Our landmark legislation today throws a lifeline to families who are struggling to maintain the American dream of home ownership during this housing crisis and the economic downturn.

Families across America are being forced to make heart-wrenching decisions in order to stay in their homes. What will they pay for in this day and age, with rising gas prices, property insurance rates escalating, the cost of health care rising? But nothing is more fundamental than having a safe and clean home for your family.

The good news is that many of us in the Congress understand, and we are going to stand up for families and ensure that if you work hard and you play by the rules, the tools and resources will be made available to you to help you stay in your home.

The American people have a number of champions here in Congress that understand the importance of a safe, clean and affordable home. Chairman BARNEY FRANK has spent countless hours in providing the tools necessary for families across this country to have a safe, affordable place to live.

Chairwoman MAXINE WATERS of California has spent a great part of her career dedicated to affordable housing for American families.

Speaker PELOSI and the Chairwoman of the Rules Committee, LOUISE SLAUGHTER, are champions of American families and affordable housing as well.

Madam Speaker, today three million to four million families are expected to lose their homes to foreclosure. And when a home in your neighborhood ends up in foreclosure it affects everyone. It is usually sold at a reduced rate, and the values of homes throughout the neighborhood are affected. We have all seen these eyesores with overgrown grass, broken windows and in disrepair.

Well, that is why we are all in this together. It is vital that we fight to maintain the property values of our communities.

Madam Speaker, just a few weeks ago I had my first foreclosure workshop to get families together with lenders to try to get to a point where they could work out their loans. We were very surprised. We had over 600 individuals show up who were either in foreclosure, had fallen a month or two behind, or could see on the horizon, because of an adjustable rate loan or some family circumstance like the loss of a job or the kids going off to college, that they needed a little bit of help.

Well, we have been very active in this Congress because while this is a problem that, yes, critically affects a State like Florida, in the Tampa Bay area that I have the privilege to represent, and it affects California desperately, Ohio, Nevada, no part of the country has been immune from the sub prime lending crisis.

Fortunately, this American Housing Rescue and Foreclosure Prevention Act comes at an important time. But, you know, this Congress has been working on this for over a year and a half. So many of the initiatives contained in this package have been passed by the House of Representatives. This ''New Direction Congress'' has worked, in a bipartisan way, to pass most of the initiatives that are contained in the act today.

Families should know that H.R. 3648, the Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act, was passed and did become law at the end of last year; passed by a margin of 386–27 here in the House. It provides that over the next 3 years, families who have had to sell their homes in foreclosure will be spared from getting hit by a larger tax bill, in addition to the pain of losing their homes.

There are a number of other critical components in the Housing Rescue Package that were previously passed by the House. And I would like everyone to note, because we will probably hear a great deal of debate here today on the housing package. Everyone should note that almost all the initiatives contained in the bill today were passed over the last year and a half by wide, bipartisan margins.

First, the Neighborhood Stabilization Act. That was approved in May by a vote of 239–188. It provides grants to the States and local governments to purchase and rehabilitate foreclosed properties and turn them into safe, affordable places for folks to live.

And I would like to recognize and thank the White House for removing its veto threat. It had threatened to veto this entire package that had been negotiated with the White House over this small section that provides important tools to our State and local governments to tackle those properties that are up for foreclosure, the ones that are overgrown, that have the broken windows, allows them to go in and purchase those properties and turn them into affordable housing for families who are in need.

The package also includes the important provisions of the Federal Housing Finance Reform Act that we passed in May of 2007 by a vote of 313–104. This is vital legislation today because it establishes new and extensive oversight and regulatory authority over the Federal National Mortgage Association, Fannie Mae, and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, Freddie Mac.

To protect the taxpayers, we are instituting new requirements for the safety and soundness of the portfolio operations of these regulated entities. We need to make sure that we have oversight on the effects of the financial and housing finance markets of all these alternatives and provide an alternative to the current secondary market system for housing finance.

Madam Speaker, last September we also passed an important part of this package, the Expanding Home Ownership Act of 2007, by a margin of 348–72 here in the House. This is a critical piece because it expands access to the middle class to the low interest, low fee loans provided by the Federal Housing Administration. These FHA loans are a much better option to the sub prime loans. We are going to take a proactive step here to allow families facing foreclosure to qualify for the low interest, no fee loans offered by the FHA.

The housing package today also includes the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act of 2007. That was passed here in the House last October by a vote of 264–148. This creates a new, innovative fund that will be used to build more affordable housing for hard working families and families who have lost their homes due to foreclosure. The new trust fund will focus on construction, rehabilitation and preservation of affordable housing in our hometowns. It will pool monies to target housing for families with the greatest economic need.

And our efforts come at a critical time if we can get this trust fund up and running. See, the Federal money for affordable housing has largely disappeared under the current administration over the past 7 years.

In many communities like mine, housing agencies have thousands on the waiting list. In my hometown of Tampa, Florida, during a 1-week open enrollment session, more than 10,000 seniors, veterans and families indicated a need for housing. But instead of receiving housing, they are placed on a waiting list, and the waiting list takes up to 4 years, and it is so long that the Tampa Housing Authority is unable to help others that need it.

Madam Speaker, another important part of this housing package is the Mortgage Reform and Anti-Predatory Lending Act of 2007. Yes, we passed this here in the House last November by a vote of 291–127. It requires States to license all mortgage professionals and mandate criminal background checks, requires exams and a ban on felons participating in the mortgage loan industry.

We all know that the predatory lending was rampant during the sub prime loan run up. And I would like to draw your attention to anyone that would like to examine in depth the details of predatory lenders and how they worked. Go to the MiamiHerald.com Web site and review their series on predatory lending that they have run over the past couple of days. It is outstanding.

□ 1200

They reviewed thousands of pages of court documents, State industry reports, internal e-mails, and police reports from 2000 to 2007 and they discovered that over 5,000 people with criminal histories during that time became loan originators, a rate of nearly two a day. Worse, those include over 2,000 who had committed financial crimes such as fraud, money laundering, and grand theft. Too many of our neighbors were outright lied to and steered into unaffordable, exploding adjustable-rate mortgages without being given an option for a fixed rate and are now facing foreclosure which harms their families and all of us in their community.

To accompany this extensive package, what has been added that really has not been voted on by the House today is a request by the Treasury Secretary for new standby authority to buy stock or debt in the GSEs if it is determined that an emergency exists. This is something of an insurance policy against broader losses in the housing market that could bubble up.

Mr. Speaker, our efforts here today are absolutely necessary. Families across this country are depending on us. It's unfortunate that while the House and the new-direction Congress has been focused on affordable housing over the past year and a half and has passed terrific, substantive legislation, that it's taken a few months to get it enacted and passed in the end.

Thanks again to Chairman BARNEY FRANK for headlining our negotiations with the other body and with the White House. And I feel secure that a large bipartisan vote here today will prove that we can stand up and address this housing crisis across this country.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this rule and to the underlying legislation, which is proof of not only the Democrat majority's careless disregard for the American taxpayer but also their complete disregard for the energy crisis facing Americans today. Mr. Speaker, today you will hear the other side of the story.

This legislation—submitted late last night after the House had already finished its business for the day—is proof that when the Democrats want to bring legislation to the floor in a hurry, they're very capable of that. It's just too bad that we aren't seeing some energy legislation which would make a difference to consumers all across America.

Mr. Speaker, despite the pleas of working families and small businesses across the country, Democrats have failed on every occasion to treat the serious issue of high energy costs with the same level of urgency that they're bringing to this debate over this massive bailout of two private companies.

This is not to say that there are not good parts to this hastily negotiated legislation. While I believe that Congressman LEE TERRY, myself, and other Republicans had a better, more effective proposal, the inclusion of the first-time home buyer credit is wise and has the potential to help reinvigorate our slumping housing and homebuilding markets.

Additionally, I support the establishment of a more robust and competent regulator of the GSEs which will restore competence to the marketplace and ensure that these entities operate in a safe, sound, effective manner maintaining adequate capital and internal controls and ''contribute to the liquid, efficient, competitive, and resilient national housing financial markets that minimize the cost of housing finance.''

If this were all that the bill did, I'm confident that the bill would pass this House unanimously. Unfortunately, there are a number of extraneous provisions—cynically added by the Democrat majority to an emergency bill that they are bringing to the floor today under a rushed and closed process—that either weaken the financial position of the GSEs that they claim to be helping, provide a taxpayer bailout of reckless financial behavior, or simply don't make logical sense.

Most perplexing of all is the logical inconsistency underlying the entire bill. On the one hand, this Congress is being asked to declare an emergency and authorize the use of unlimited taxpayer funds to become a part of the Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac problem while also raising the debt limit by $800 billion to lend these companies as much money as they may need. On the other hand, this bill creates an affordable housing trust fund that taxes the GSEs to support questionably effective low-income housing activities and to cover the losses that the FHA will surely incur after the Federal Government accepts financial responsibility for the most toxic loans in the marketplace.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will ask my Democrat colleagues that drafted this legislation, which is it? Are Fannie and Freddie private companies teetering on the brink of financial disaster thereby justifying this unprecedented taxpayer exposure and government intervention into the marketplace? Or are they cash cows that can and should be forever milked to provide financial support to every low-income housing whim that this Congress can dream of? I ask this because the answer simply cannot be both.

Mr. Speaker, because this lockdown rule provides the minority with only 60 minutes to debate this 694-page bill, I'm going to use the little time that I have to let my Republican colleagues come to the floor and use this limited opportunity to discuss all of the shortcomings associated with this bailout of mortgage lenders, investors, and speculators. I will leave it to my Republican colleagues to talk about all of their problems associated with the creation of this permanent housing slush fund, this $800 billion debt-ceiling increase, and this new $4 billion liability that will allow local governments to expose themselves to the up-and-down risks of the real estate market. And perhaps most of all, I will leave it to my colleagues to let them explain why the multibillion-dollar tax increase included in this bill to fund all of the bad ideas I've just described and certainly many more is a bad idea.

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

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to yield 5 minutes to the distinguished chairwoman of the Rules Committee, Ms. SLAUGHTER of New York.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I certainly thank the gentlelady for yielding and for her exemplary service on the Rules Committee.

Mr. Speaker, we know today that we are in a crisis without question. Families all across this great Nation are wondering if they're going to lose their house, what they're going to do next, burdened by a mortgage crisis that we have not seen in a generation, and it makes me angry.

As America's families call out for relief, we have this bipartisan bill before us today to try to address it. As we consider this legislation, we have to ask ourselves why are we in this position and how did we get into this situation in the first place? If we don't know the answer to that, we're not going to be sure that the next generation is not going to be asked to bail out the wealthy.

Mr. Speaker, the past 7 years brought some of the most egregious financial blunders this country has ever seen. On a daily basis we discover new evidence of incompetence. Americans have been blindsided by the mortgage crisis just as they were blinded by the savings and loan crisis. Due to the lack of oversight by this administration and the previous Congresses believing that most businesses and agencies should simply police themselves, American families are paying the price at the same time as the cost of gasoline and groceries skyrocket and foreclosure rates continue to climb.

We're seeing the evidence of this administration's failed policies play out in neighborhoods across the country. From California to New York, from Texas to Michigan, millions of hardworking families, mothers, fathers, daughters, sons, grandmothers, and grandfathers have had their homes foreclosed, their dreams shattered, and many of them find themselves homeless.

Mr. Speaker, recent reports estimate that 1.4 million homes will enter into foreclosure this year alone. It was reported in May that there were 157 new mortgage foreclosures filed every day in New York City. In my district in New York, the housing vacancy rate in Buffalo has risen 46 percent over the past 6 years, and soon the city will own one out of every 12 or 13 homes. That is 7,000 to 8,000 homes.

Despite these staggering numbers, our President, the optimist, continues to insist that our financial systems are ''basically sound.'' I have to wonder if the Americans who poured their lives and savings into their homes feel the same way.

Make no mistake about it, this crisis didn't jump out of the woodwork yesterday. It has been years in the making. But instead of taking meaningful action to protect Americans, their investments, their livelihood, and the American economy, the administration and the previous Congress has insisted the problem didn't exist. They told Americans a story of a healthy robust economy while the reality they were living told them something quite different.

Pervasive greed has replaced the public good. This is the administration that led us into war in Iraq, that won't address global warming, and built an energy policy based on the Enron loophole. Insisting upon living in a dreamworld, this administration failed to take any meaningful action to rein in the housing crisis until it was spiraling completely out of control. The failure to accept the reality of the situation has led us to this problem we're in today.

Crucial opportunities were missed to investigate the risky lending practices that Americans are suffering the consequences of today. Opportunities to instill safeguards to ensure that Americans are able to afford their mortgages were lost.

Mr. Speaker, the mortgage crisis is complex, and there is enough blame to go around. But it is clear that the lack of oversight allowed, if not encouraged, this crisis, and at the same time, the heads of the GSEs were paid millions of dollars in salary and millions of dollars in bonuses every year for not overseeing the work they were hired to do.

At the very least, thorough oversight would have uncovered how risky the lending and investment practices at the root of this crisis actually are—serving as a warning sign to the likely participants. Instead of oversight, they encouraged deregulation. Instead of holding hearings, they allowed big business to run rampant over protecting the most vulnerable Americans. Instead of strengthening our critical safeguards, they looked the other way while our Nation entered into a mortgage meltdown. For the past 7 years, this administration has ignored the needs and security of the American people.

Should Americans working every day pay the price for this recklessness? Should retired Americans who depend on their homes for their retirement pay the price for their troubling risks? Should future generations lose their shot at the American dream because of this incompetence?

Mr. Speaker, the Congress is not going to stand for it. Like President Franklin Roosevelt, who led this Nation out of our last great economic crisis, this Democrat-led Congress is committed to helping families out of this crisis and ensuring the situation never happens again.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN). The time of the gentlewoman from New York has expired.

Ms. CASTOR. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Sadly after 1929, all the safeguards that President Roosevelt put on to have no more bank failures in the United States have almost all been removed. He recognized, President Roosevelt did, the strength of a great nation depends on the strength of its working families, and our strength is about exhausted.

Everything that he did, as I say, has been done away in the past 7 years, and I think that restoring some of the safeguards that he put on financial institutions would be a start.

The legislation we are considering today was forged by bipartisan consensus, and it will take bipartisan consensus to focus on future legislation to address the issues. This is a short-term solution today to a large and long-term problem. In these troubled times, righting the housing crisis is an important first step to getting our country back on track.

Quite simply, ladies and gentlemen, we need stronger regulations, we need real teeth, we need oversight, and we have to clean up the mess. I'm happy that Members on both sides are dedicated to doing that. I implore my colleagues to commit to increased oversight. Together we have to make sure this does not happen again.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, there are lots of reasons to oppose this bill. We've talked about the things that we have in common with the bill. But I think it's important that we talk about what this bill actually does.

First of all, the GSE bailout. The 18-month term of authority for the Treasury to extend Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac's line of credit and purchase their equity is too long, we believe. Six months should be the limit. Not 18 months. The conditions under which a bailout is allowed should be clearly stated and should restrict the unlimited authority of the Treasury Secretary to act. The amount of Federal investment authorized should not be unlimited.

We've just given two great ideas, ideas that, because of a closed rule, you will not see on this floor of the House of Representatives. The conditions under which a bailout is allowed should be clearly stated and should restrict the unlimited authority of the Treasury Secretary to act.

Mr. Speaker, we believe the amount of Federal investment authorized should not be unlimited, and perhaps most importantly, we see that what Congress is doing is abdicating completely our authority and our role to the executive branch.

□ 1215

That's bad policy, and we should not be doing that on this floor of the House of Representatives today.

Secondly, the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, this legislation would place a permanent Affordable Housing Trust Fund mandate on the GSEs. In light of their current liquidity and capital conditions, taking money from Fannie or Freddie is a bad policy. Taking money from two of these instruments should not be done.

Moreover, the Affordable Housing Trust Fund could be used as a slush fund for political activity purposes. We see one of the housing groups that actively engages in open partisanship on a regular basis, and yet, they quite likely will qualify for a lot of taxpayer money. For what purpose? More politics.

Mr. Speaker, once again, the Republican Party is on the floor offering alternatives to this bad piece of legislation. We are not just saying ''no.''

What we're saying is this is an open slush fund and should not be allowed.

Mr. Speaker, we reserve our time.

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), a champion for affordable housing and America's families.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I came to the floor to support this rule because it is so important that we move to deal with the sub-prime crisis in this country. It is not getting better. It is getting worse. And we find that community after community is being destroyed because we have boarded up, foreclosed homes that are driving down the property values, driving down the cost of the houses that are now upside down on their mortgages, and they cannot sell them and they're stuck.

And so the Rules Committee has worked hard, understanding the many aspects of this issue, and they have heard the legislation that is before us today that would simply mark down these properties by 15 percent. FHA, which we have strengthened, will do the refinance on these properties. We've also learned that FHA has been strengthened substantially with this legislation, and that part of the bill that I've been very much involved in will provide about $4 billion to cities and counties so that they can have money to rehabilitate these properties, put them back on the market for sale and for rent, and help to stabilize these neighborhoods.

And so the GSEs are in the bill, and you're going to hear a lot about the GSEs. But the fact of the matter is this bill is about stabilizing this economy, and we cannot afford to have the largest two semi-government agencies unprotected. While some people know that there's more work to be done on the GSEs, we're talking about now making sure that we put confidence in the market and that we send a message out there that we're not going to have disruption in the market at this time, that we're going to do something about the foreclosures and about the problems that we're confronted with.

I thank you.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I'd like to yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia, Dr. PRICE.

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Texas for yielding.

There are so many remarkable aspects of this bill that deserve debate and discussion, but it's not going to happen. So the question that I would ask is, what on Earth are the Democrats afraid of? What on Earth is the new majority afraid of? This majority, the Democrat majority, promised the Nation a fair and open process, and again, they've failed to live up to their promises.

This bill, we received the final language of almost 700 pages in this bill at 6:30 p.m. last night, 6:30 p.m., Mr. Speaker, and we were told that the Rules Committee was meeting at 7:30 p.m., 1 hour later. The bill itself increases the debt limit by $800 billion. Mr. Speaker, by my calculation, that is $1.3 billion a minute to allow Members an opportunity to look at the bill and determine whether or not amendments ought be in order. But the Rules Committee didn't accept any amendments.

The bill has the potential to increase the national debt by 50 percent, by $5 trillion. Don't you think the taxpayers of this Nation deserve an open and an honest debate about that?

The bill gives unprecedented and unchecked authority to the Treasury Department to put taxpayers on the hook for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. And we've been given 2 hours to debate it, with no amendments, no opportunity for change? What are you afraid of? What are you afraid of?

The most sweeping changes to housing law in a generation were circulated to our offices just 16 hours prior to floor consideration. Now, this is in contrast to what the leadership, the Democrat leadership, said just 2 short years ago before they became leaders.

Speaker PELOSI said in June of 2006, ''Because the debate has been limited and Americans' voices silenced by this restrictive rule, I urge my colleagues to vote against the rule.''

Well, I agree with the Speaker. But what's changed? What's changed for her? Is it political expediency or is it a broken promise?

In December of 2006, following the election, now-Majority Leader STENY HOYER bragged to the media. He said, ''We intend to have a Rules Committee . . . that gives opposition voices and alternative proposals the ability to be heard and considered on the floor of the House.''

What happened, Mr. Speaker? What are they afraid of? What are they afraid of? Here we are considering a rule in which the majority didn't even bother to post a process by which Members could submit amendments. What's changed, Mr. Speaker? What are they afraid of? What debate would be so scary that they wouldn't even allow an amendment or an alternative on the floor?

The chairwoman of the Rules Committee, Ms. SLAUGHTER, said, ''If we want to foster democracy in this body, we should take the time and thoughtfulness to debate all major legislation under an open rule, not just appropriations bills, which are already restricted. An open process should be the norm and not the exception.''

What changed, Mr. Speaker? What changed? What are they so afraid of?

The Democratic Caucus Chair RAHM EMANUEL said, ''Let us have an up-or-down vote. Do not be scared. Do not hide behind some little rule. Come on out here. Put it on the table, and let us have a vote. So do not hide behind the rule. If this is what you want to do, let us have an up-or-down vote. You can put your vote's right up there . . . and then the American people can see what it is all about.''

Mr. Speaker, what's so scary about an open rule? Such heavy-handed tactics effectively silence half of the American people. How can that be consistent with the campaign promises that we heard from this new majority?

A number of Republicans, including myself, submitted amendments to the bill. I submitted two thoughtful and substantive amendments.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I would like to give the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. But my two amendments were not even given an opportunity to come to the floor for a vote.

So this, just like energy, Mr. Speaker, just like energy, we are unable to bring the American people's desires to the floor to have a vote. That's all we ask for.

Mr. Speaker, what's so scary? What are they afraid of? Are they afraid of the American people?

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to correct the record here because this House of Representatives has been working in a bipartisan way for almost 2 years now on housing legislation. In fact, in my opening statement, I chronicled the number of bills starting last year that have been passed in this House by substantial bipartisan margins and sent over to the Senate where they waited. To say that there's been no opportunity for amendment or debate, that's wholly inaccurate.

Out of this package, it contains at least five or six bills that had committee hearings, extensive hearings, the opportunity for amendment in committee, the opportunity for debate, previous debate, debate on the floor, amendments here on the floor, debate in the Rules Committee.

So I think it's important that the record reflect that reality.

And at this time, I'd like to yield 5 minutes to the chairman of the Financial Services Committee, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK).

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, we confront here one of those moments in which there is a certain degree of confusion, and we are here, in substantial part, today at the urgent request of the Bush administration.

This package has several pieces. Three of them, in fact, are urgent requests of the Bush administration, and indeed, the Bush administration does have a criticism to make of the pace with which we are doing this. They think it is too slow.

Well, Members on the other side, some of them have complained that we're moving too rapidly. The Secretary of the Treasury has been a little frustrated that we were moving so slowly. Clearly, we have here an example of the classic situation in which the right hand does not know what the far right hand is doing.

We are dealing today with legislation that has, with one exception, already passed this House. As to the ability to amend and debate, one of the high priorities of this administration has been significantly increasing the regulatory structure for Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the Federal home loan banks. This House passed it last April of 2007. It was very much debated in committee, and it came to the floor of the House with many amendments. Well, that piece has already been debated on the floor of the House and amended, subject to a fairly open rule, not totally open.

We have the modernization of the Federal Housing Administration, another high priority of the Bush administration. Several months ago, the head of the FHA, the Bush appointee, Mr. Montgomery, the head of the FHA lamented the fact that we hadn't acted. Despite that, the senior Republican on the Financial Services Committee sent me a letter last week saying don't act on it. So we have the head of the FHA a couple of months ago complaining that we had not acted on this urgent administration priority, and then I get a letter from the senior Republican of this committee saying don't do that piece, leave that piece out. He talks about doing only 1 piece, that one's left out.

So we have the administration's request for GSE reform, already voted on and debated last year; FHA modernization, already voted on and debated by the House. This is a re-passage to accommodate, frankly, some of the problems we've had with the Senate.

We did have the FHA rescue plan that was voted on on the floor of the House, and that one was not amendable, and I acknowledge that.

All of the things I've talked about, by the way, these three pieces that have already been voted on, all passed the House by very large majorities. All had significant Republican support. All were fully debated in committee and amendments offered. This is a repackaging.

Now, the gentleman who preceded me said what are we afraid of. I guess I do have a certain fear of being caught in this Republican crossfire, with the administration telling us move more quickly and the Republican members of the committee saying how dare you move so quickly; and the Secretary of the Treasury saying we'll have confidence undermined in the market, and the Republicans saying we didn't have enough time to read the bill.

Again, almost everything in here has previously been debated in committee and voted on on the floor of the House. There's one new element, and I agree that did not go to committee. We didn't have a public hearing on it. The Secretary of the Treasury asked us not to have a public hearing, said he thought it would be damaging to the market if we had a public hearing. We have had a week and a half to talk about it, to discuss it, including in informal ways, and I've been open to discuss it with anyone who wanted to. But the Secretary of the Treasury did say that he thought the hearing would be a problem.

So what are we afraid of? Well, I had a certain fear of rebuffing the Secretary of the Treasury, President Bush's appointee, on the matter that he thought was so important as to how we handled it. So that's why we are here.

This is a balanced bill that includes a significant increase in the reform of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. It does give to the administration the ability to make some loans to them or maybe buy shares with an instruction that they protect the taxpayer with various mechanisms and with a requirement that the compensation of the CEOs and the top officials of those agencies be strictly regulated.

□ 1230

But it doesn't do that in isolation. It does it only as part of a bill which significantly tightens the increase, that tightens and increases the regulatory structure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. CASTOR. I yield the gentleman 30 additional seconds.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. So just to summarize, this bill again responds to an urgent request by the Bush administration that we enacted in April, we passed it in the House in April. We tried to put it in the stimulus. The administration said not yet. That's already been voted on and debated.

It has the FHA modernization that's been voted on and debated. It has the FHA rescue plan, voted on and debated. All of those have already been in the bill, and three of these pieces in this bill are urgent requests of the Bush administration.

It does do some things for affordable housing, and I understand that many on the other side are ideologically opposed to that. But they were ideologically opposed to it when we debated it on the floor. And on the affordable housing trust fund, we have already voted about 10 times on the floor of the House.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Dallas, Texas (Mr. HENSARLING).

Mr. HENSARLING. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts, the chairman of the Financial Services Committee, who indicated that part of the package before us was a request of the Bush administration.

It may be a request of the Bush administration, but it was necessitated by that gentleman and by others who for years have forestalled any type of reform of Fannie and Freddie, neither man nor beast, half private, half public. You can go back, Mr. Speaker, and look at the record.

Before I arrived here almost 6 years ago, the debate has been ensuing how can you have these entities that essentially are able to privatize their profits but socialize their losses and not put the taxpayers at risk?

Now we were told, well, there is no taxpayer guarantee here. There's nothing to worry about. I've got a press release here dated '01 from the chairman of the Capital Market Subcommittee who says that the new GSE bill is a solution in search of a problem; that OFHEO has developed and implemented a robust and comprehensive and continuous examination program that works.

Well, many of us have said, no, that is wrong. I have got language from, again, the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts who says, dating back to a hearing in 2003, ''I believe there has been more alarm raised about potential unsafety and unsoundness than, in fact, exists.''

Well, I think what we discovered today is perhaps there is a lot of unsafety. Perhaps there is a lot of unsoundness that has to be addressed.

So now we are being asked to take—really this is a historic moment—we are being asked to take a terribly flawed housing bill that could put the taxpayer on the line for $300 billion to help bail out people on Wall Street who made bad bets, and then couple that with an absolutely breathtaking bailout of Fannie and Freddie that in its worst-case scenario, which admittedly is unlikely, but in its worst-case scenario could add $5 trillion to the national debt at the snap of a finger. That's an increase of 50 percent in the national debt overnight.

That's what would happen, Mr. Speaker, if you have the Federal taxpayer underwrite all the debts of Fannie and Freddie. I mean, this will help establish this particular Congress as having, perhaps, the worst record on fiscal responsibility in our Nation's history. They have had lots of competition.

There are so many different reasons why we should not pass the bill today. Let's look, number one, at the underlying housing bill. You have 95 percent of America that either rents their home, owns their home outright and are current in their mortgage, and they are being asked to bail out the other 5 percent. Now out of that 5 percent, some are very deserving. Some were victims of mortgage fraud, predatory lending. Some had bad reverses in the economy that were beyond their control. But others are not so deserving. Many were speculators. Many engaged in mortgage fraud themselves. There's been an explosion of mortgage fraud in the market.

Finally, some people just didn't exercise personal responsibility. When people are struggling to pay their own mortgages, who acted responsibly, they shouldn't be forced to pay for their neighbors as well, much less bail out Wall Street.

Let's look at the Fannie and Freddie package.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from Texas has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield the gentleman 30 additional seconds.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I regrettably admit that today Fannie and Freddie are too big to fail. The repercussions to our economy could be dire.

But we should not pass any legislation that doesn't ensure the taxpayers are never here again. Not only does this legislation not ensure that, it makes it worse.

I mean, even the Washington Post, not exactly a bastion of conservative thought said, ''Strangely, though, both the Senate and House versions of the bill potentially increase the very risks Mr. Paulson's plan is intended to mitigate.''

Don't give these people a blank check. Vote this down.

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, we reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE).

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the famed economist Milton Friedman once said that the government's solution to a problem is usually as bad as the problem itself. I think that that is certainly applicable here today.

When we had the housing bill up for debate a few months ago, I had a bit of a dialogue with the chairman of the Financial Services Committee. I had mentioned that he had appropriately and often excoriated Republicans when we would lavish corporate subsidies on private interests there, when we didn't live up to our belief in the principle of capitalism. I think that was sometimes deserving.

But here is a gentleman that certainly understands the free market and understands that this bill has moral hazard written all over it. We are pretending to chain a monster here, and we are, instead, letting that monster loose.

The competitive advantages that Freddie and Fannie have had over the past several years, with an implicit government guarantee, which many people have tried to tell us who have wanted GSE reform for so long did not really exist, that taxpayers were really not on the hook. Well, that implicit guarantee today is made explicit.

Can you imagine the competitive advantage going forward that Fannie and Freddie will have over their competitors when you have an explicit guarantee rather than an implicit guarantee? This is simply the wrong way to go. If we wanted to tailor something that dealt with GSEs, both with ensuring that they are solvent but making sure that the taxpayers aren't put in this position again, that would be one thing. This bill does not do that. We are unchaining a monster here, and we are making the situation far worse.

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for her leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this bill and the rule. I want to thank, first of all, Chairman FRANK and Chairwoman WATERS for crafting a bipartisan bill to address this crisis, which is what it is. As a former member of the Financial Services Committee, I know how effective they are in bringing bipartisan consensus to the committee.

Quite simply, far too many families are losing their dream of homeownership. It truly has become a nightmare. This bill will restore that dream by modernizing the Federal Housing Administration; strengthening oversight of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac; raising loan limits to help homeowners in high-priced markets like California; creating an affordable housing trust fund, which is very important. Senator BERNIE SANDERS and myself introduced this bill several years ago.

Also, I want to thank Chairman FRANK for including language from my bill to provide new guidelines for reverse mortgages, protecting our seniors from another potential financial crisis, and, of course, the $4 billion in CDBG funds to State and local governments to buy, rehab and resell foreclosed homes, helping to fix blighted homes and stabilize prices in hard-hit neighborhoods like in my district in Oakland, California.

I strongly support this rule and the bill.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, if I could inquire upon the time remaining on both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 11 minutes remaining, and the gentlewoman from Florida has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inquire of the gentlewoman from Florida if we could ask unanimous consent to extend on both sides, 15 additional minutes. We have a lot of speakers that are here on the floor, and it seems like a reasonable thing to do.

Ms. CASTOR. I will have to object to that. I will note that the rule does provide for an extended amount of debate on the legislation, itself.

Mr. SESSIONS. Well, Mr. Speaker, we tried to get additional debate on this issue, but I know the closed rule we have got is intended entirely to squeeze down time and the amount of debate that would take place, confirming that again.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL).

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. I thank the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. Speaker, there are a whole bunch of things in this bill I think are awful. I don't like funds, government funds to buy foreclosed properties. I don't like having a fee that might increase the interest rates that people pay for loans. I don't like creating a slush fund that will probably largely go to some political organizations. And I do not like helping irresponsible lenders that don't deserve to get any help.

However, I am going to support this bill today. I am going to support it because we are in a position where we cannot afford to not have Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac in the marketplace.

If you think the economy is tough now, watch what would happen if we took 50 percent of our lending capacity out of this marketplace today.

We can argue about whether Fannie and Freddie should be as they are constructed today, and I don't think they should be. We should have an argument about how they should be constructed in the future. We should have a debate about that. But they are as they are now, and the guarantee from the Federal Government is implicit, and this bill will make it explicit, and I think that is, very unfortunately, something we are going to have to do.

The bill also does provide some lending support out there. There are people out there who did get in a problem that was not of their own making and who do deserve some help and some support. Unfortunately, we will be supporting a lot of people who don't deserve, but at least it will get to people who do deserve support as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, I stand before you reluctantly supporting the bill, but supporting it because we cannot afford at this time to see the housing market slip further and further into a problem. Although this has a number of things which won't help at all, it does have some things which I think are necessary.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Yes, I would be happy to yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I appreciate your perspective on this. It's not one with which I agree, but I appreciate your perspective.

But wouldn't the gentleman agree that under this rule, shouldn't this be a rule where all amendments are debated?

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Yes.

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished gentlelady from Florida for her leadership and yielding to me. I thank the chairman of the full committee.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are asking this Congress to do the right thing. They are certainly not asking us to blame them for the crisis in the mortgage foreclosure market.

And as a member of the Judiciary Committee, I know the number of bankruptcies of hardworking Americans. This bill provides a refundable first-time home buyer credit, $7,500. It provides a temporary increase in the low-income housing tax credit. And it does not bail out Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

It is simply a guarantee to protect the American consumers and taxpayers. This Congress will make sure you are protected. All it does is says the Secretary of the Treasury can provide a guarantee if necessary. Then, of course, it buys back all those foreclosed homes on your block that keeps your house from going down in value. This is a bill that is needed.

I support the rule and the underlying bill. The American people are asking this Congress to do the right thing, and this Democratic Congress is going to do the right thing on behalf of the American people.

The people of Houston Texas, the 18th Congressional District, need this relief. We will vote on it today.

□ 1245

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS).

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation has been a long time coming, and I'm grateful for the work of my colleagues on the House Financial Services Committee in bringing this legislation to the floor today.

Like Congressman JOHN CAMPBELL from California, I believe this is imperfect legislation, but needed. I am hopeful passage of this bill will give required liquidity and credit for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, restore some confidence in the housing market, provide stronger regulation over the GSEs, keep more American families in their homes, and protect the value of the homes of their neighbors.

The past year has been a tumultuous one for the mortgage market, and we are now in the midst of a significant housing crisis. It is absolutely essential we take action. Now is not the time to raise taxes, cut spending, and stand by idly like former President Herbert Hoover and let an imperfect market work its wonders.

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I have the right to close, so I will reserve the balance of my time until the gentleman from Texas has made his closing statement.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN).

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, today we're considering a massive housing bill which saddles the American taxpayer with billions of dollars to bail out both Fannie and Freddie as well as irresponsible lenders, and yes, even some irresponsible borrowers.

But what will the American taxpayer be getting in return for being asked to be put on the hook for a deal that they weren't a part of and now all of the sudden they have to jump in and bail out someone else? Remember, 95 percent of Americans are paying on time their mortgages, their rents. They weren't a part of this very bad equation, but now they're being asked to come in, to have their taxes raised to bail out irresponsible lenders, and yes, even some irresponsible borrowers.

What are they going to get in return? Are they going to be assured that the worst loans that were made won't be dumped into this refinance program? No, not going to happen. Will they be assured that this affordable housing slush fund that will finance millions of dollars for political groups like ACORN, groups that are currently under investigation in States for voter fraud, that they won't be getting more tax money? No. Are they assured that Fannie and Freddie will never again become too big to fail? No. Fannie and Freddie will become even bigger. Are they assured of a clear path out of this explicit Federal backdrop? No. It's not going to happen. In fact, it's the opposite. The banks are going to rid their balance sheets of the worst performing loans—what we used to call ''dogs'' in the industry—and it will encourage them to serve up on a silver platter for hardworking Americans a huge tax increase for them to pay.

The hardworking Americans, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that are financing this bailout are already paying over $4 a gallon for gasoline and prices for groceries they never thought that they would have to pay. They are the forgotten man, Mr. Speaker. The ''forgotten man'' is the hardworking man and the hardworking single woman who is paying their bills, but who now is being asked to front the cost for poor performing loans. It's a bad deal, and we need to reject this rule.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 1 minute and 45 seconds to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT).

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I thank the gentleman.

I rise to the floor to oppose this rule and to also oppose the underlying bill, a bill that would, as the hurricanes that are going across this country, devastate this country financially and put the American taxpayer on the hook, not for $10 billion, not for $20 million, we're upwards to $5 trillion.

I commend the hearing that we had last night on this bill, which was over 1 hour. That's an hour more than we've had any discussion whatsoever on this potential of putting the American taxpayer on the hook for $5 trillion. Chairman FRANK did not hold one single hearing to discuss how this would impact the American public nor the American financial system; hearing after hearing that we held on all sorts of other things, but never could we get to this topic.

In fact, the chairman last night called ''nonsensical'' the idea that the American public could be put on the hook for upwards to $300 billion. Well, remember this; that was the same chairman, unfortunately, who told us 5 years ago and 3 years ago and 1 year ago, nonsensical was the idea that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac could ever fail. In fact, that's the same chairman who told us that he would never support the bailing out of the GSEs. In fact, if I looked into the transcripts of our past hearings where the gentleman from Massachusetts spoke, he said repeatedly, ''I would never support the bailout of Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac or the GSEs.'' Well, sir, here we are today, upwards to a $5 trillion bailout for the GSEs. In fact, this will make the savings and loan scandals of a few years ago pale by comparison.

And I remind the American public, how did that unfold? First, it was a $10 billion request to the American taxpayer that they used to bail out the savings and loan. Then it was $50, $70—finally, $200 billion plus was asked for the American taxpayer to bail out the American savings and loans in this country. That's the exact same thing that's potentially going to occur here today as we bail out Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac for their exclusively bad decisionmaking.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I give the gentleman an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I appreciate the additional 15 seconds, and I would yield those 15 seconds to the gentlelady from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. With a heavy heart, I rise in opposition to this rule and the Wall Street rescue bill. Why? The key provision added over the weekend amounts to a huge elephant galloping over the American people with its blank check to Wall Street. In exchange, the American people get to cling to fool's gold—a few billion dollars to cities and States which are facing hundreds of billions of dollars of loss. Ohio alone needs the total amount of meager funds allocated to workouts. Sadly, less than one percent of the assistance in this bill is targeted to those local communities! We need a bill that strengthens each community's real estate values through Federal bond guarantees to them, not to the big investment banks and uninsured housing enterprises that caused this problem in the first place. I thank the gentleman very much for yielding.

INTRODUCTION

President Franklin Roosevelt aptly gave a name to the Wall Street financial manipulators who, time and again, put our nation in enormous financial peril. He called them "malefactors of wealth"—"malefactors," from the Latin "mal" meaning "bad," and "factor," meaning "makers" . . . makers of bad. That is, people who do great harm with the use of wealth.

As a scion of old wealth himself, Roosevelt knew them well. He knew the lengths to which they would go to satisfy their cravings for more, and more, and more—as if reason and prudence didn't apply. And they did not care who they ran over in their quest. Their deeds have placed our nation at risk, time and again. Now, with the mortgage foreclosure crisis, they have done it again—this time, the damage is so huge it dwarfs the savings and loan fiasco of the 1980's when they ponzi-schemed up housing markets, saw them crash, and then ran to Congress to bail them out. Back then, the perpetrators centered their attention on California, Texas, Arizona, and the hot housing markets. Yet all Americans, from all states—like Ohio which was not one of the epicenters of their gluttony—were forced to pay the bills for their bad deeds.

Today, Congress will vote to burden the American people with another blank check, totaling hundreds of billions of dollars lasting three generations, to Wall Street brokerages and the shareholders of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae. It is times like this that my heart feels very heavy for my fellow countrymen and women, as I cannot save us from this wrongful debt being imposed. This bailout of Wall Street giants never had a hearing in Committee.

Why should our people be made to pay for them? What will our communities get for this added, massive debt obligation?

THE LEGISLATION

The Foreclosure ''Rescue'' bill we're being asked to vote on today won't live up to its name. I challenge any Member to tell me how much help your district will receive from this trickle down to turn around local housing markets. This bill does not measure up to the challenge

The Congressional Budget Office under estimates that the bailout package will cost the American public $25 billion. This estimate isn't a good indication of the potential cost since $25 billion is just an estimate based on many faulty assumptions. The potential cost to the public actually is several hundred billion dollars. Fannie Mae and Freddie's current debts total $5.2 trillion, which equals our national debt of $5 trillion.

The fig leaf offered—and that our communities are clinging to is the promise of a mere $4 billion in community aid plus $10 billion for state housing authorities to counteract the nearly $356 billion loss in property values and property taxes in 2007 and 2008. $4 billion doesn't even meet the City of Cleveland's needs; Ohio alone is estimated to need $164.2 billion, just the gap for the state housing authority is $20 billion. With blocks of abandoned, vandalized, and stripped homes to contend with, along with an onslaught of displaced families, our communities are being asked to do more than ever, with fewer and fewer resources.

This bill asks taxpayers to issue a blank check with the words ''stand by authority''—to Wall Street—for the first time to federally uninsured investment houses and secondary market housing agencies. This critical provision never went through Committee, there were no hearings. This was a Boardroom deal.

The former head of Goldman Sachs is now the Secretary of Treasury under a Republican administration; under the former Democratic administration, the Secretary of Treasury was from Goldman Sachs. Just this week, Goldman Sachs' top banker, Ken Wilson, will take a leave from his job there to join his former boss at Treasury, Secretary Paulson. Who's running whose show here? Is Treasury serving the American people or simply Goldman Sachs, IndyMac Bank, and Bears Stearns?

Further, under this bill the Department of Treasury that failed to regulate, examine, and audit is now going to be given even more power to create another bureaucracy to regulate the Department that didn't regulate. This house of cards only gets more topsy.

Last year, Freddie Mac Chairman and Chief Executive Richard Syron received $19.8 million in compensation—even though the company's stock lost half its value. During the same period, Fannie Mae President and Chief Executive Daniel Mudd was paid $12.2 million, including a $2.2 million bonus. But curbing their excess doesn't even come close to offsetting the huge debt this bill anticipates for the American people.

Our cities are left holding the bag, yet the greedy corporations that blew through town are being made whole. Meanwhile, homeowners have lost decades of savings and equity. Once tight-knit communities are left shattered, shuttered, and dangerous. In order to make things even worse, big banks like Citigroup are now plundering our local communities even more by offering land contracts. How much lower can these banks sink? And yet Congress rewards them?

SAVINGS AND LOAN CRISIS BACKGROUND

Even worse than the proposed no strings attached bailout is the fact that this is déjà vu all over again. The Savings and Loan bailout of the 1980s cost the American taxpayers upwards of half a trillion dollars. The American people were asked to grin and bear it for the good of the Nation. States like Ohio were not among the worst abusers, yet our taxpayers were forced to bear this debt load too.

The savings and loan scandal destroyed an entire class of community banks, moved more power to Wall Street and money center banks, and exploded our public debt. Back then, they told Americans that if they were bailed out, such catastrophes would never happen again. They claimed a new money instrument was being developed by Wall Street called the mortgage backed security. Through its magic, the public would never have to worry again about greedy bankers in the housing market. Your mortgage would be safer, as it would be packaged with others and sold through securities Wall Street would invent, like an anonymous piece of paper.

Meanwhile, face to face community banking, and necessary underwriting and regulation first enacted for home lending in the Great Depression, were destroyed. Financing became more and more hot wired, more absentee, even over the phone and internet. A deluge of promotional materials from the banks arrived at our doorsteps, almost daily, urging mortgagees to borrow more and more against their shrinking home equity, to borrow for almost anything—a vacation, a car, to put on a roof. Few cautioned against it, and the debt pushers pushed on.

Home values inflated beyond their worth. But the regulators, like FNMA and Freddie, the OTS and FDIC stood frozen in place. The mortgage itself—which is a debt that must be repaid—was rolled up and packaged with thousands of other mortgages and, as America itself is in debt, sold into the international market for the first time to foreign buyers. Try to work out a loan when your financier is located in China.

Sadly, their entire modus operandi is an old trick—create a house of cards with money by pushing risk beyond what can be considered prudent, leverage the money pyramids where the underlying asset is purposely poorly appraised, and voila—the perpetrators make billions until the market they have created busts. Then blame the American people and run to Congress to close the gap by borrowing, borrowing, and borrowing from the very people they thought so little of. Oh yes, and then, blame the whole washout on ''them,'' the public.

Wall Street's money grabbers are back, this time stretching their long arms even deeper into your pockets to cover their latest craze—draining out our home equity and home values. Americans have built their equity over decades in their mortgages. Yet Wall Street set its sights on families' home equity, and went after it with a vengeance. It was the only major savings pool America had left other than our public assets like roads, water systems, and public works. Millions of families succumbed to the snake oil.

Overall, home equity in our nation, our largest source of savings—has now dipped below fifty percent for the first time in modern history. Millions of Americans have negative equity in their homes, they own more on their homes than their homes are worth.

So, to fill the gap, Wall Street wants the American taxpayer—the people they bilked—to bail them out, again. Bear Stearns succeeded to the tune of $30 billion. So now there is a longer line of bankers lined up to prop up their profligacy. This bill legitimizes their behavior and gets crumbs in return for the American people. The malefactors wealth manipulated and created panic in the market. They got the Bush Administration to propose an ''emergency'' bailout plan. And then they got Congress to ''limit'' executive pay as a fig leaf to cover over their real motherload in this bill. Not a bad bit of insider dealing.

But what about the American people? What about their interests?

MEETING THE NEEDS AND STRENGTHENING OF OUR COMMUNITIES

Let's get something real for the taxpayer. And let's get it now. As the Economist proposed this week, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac could issue their own debt and exchange it for loans from the government—this way, our taxpayers who are on the hook at least get something if markets recover. Otherwise, all this bill does is hand over the U.S. Mint to Wall Street.

I ask any Member: how much of this bill is going to your district relative to what it is going to cost to turn your local real estate market around?

If you don't know the details, you shouldn't vote for the bill.

And how do you know when the help will arrive? This bill is a trickle down from Wall Street; communities across this nation will be left holding an empty bag.

Our communities need expanded bonding power at the grass roots, not more rewards for Wall Street brokers who got us into this sorry situation in the first place.

We need trickle up, not trickle down.

Our communities need expanded bonding power at the grassroots level to raise the funds to combat this crisis, not more rewards to the very institutions and people who created this mess.

I have a better idea. Rather than Congress vowing to borrow more money—plus interest—from the American taxpayer for three generations to come, to make Wall Street whole, why not instead design a refinancing approach that benefits the taxpayer, and the communities they live in? Rescue local real estate markets. Give the bulk of assistance there. Let any refinancing medium reach deep into every affected community across this country. Stop the hemorrhage. Accelerate workouts now to save real estate values from plummeting even further—including on families who own properties that had nothing to do with this ponzi scheme.

Strengthen each community's real estate values through federal bond guarantees to local countries and cities, not Wall Street. Empower local people. Empower local housing authorities' ability to respond. Democratize this bond offering. The largesse of the American people should not trickle down from the big bond houses on Wall Street who caused the problem, traffic in debt, and operate far from home. The bill being proposed in Congress is weighted WAY too heavily in their favor. For affected localities, less than 1 percent of this proposed aid is targeted to them; Wall Street gets the lion's share. Imagine a bill that strengthens local real estate markets NOW, and into the future through additional federal bond guarantee authority to those same communities. The ability of hundreds of affected jurisdictions to do refinancing and workouts will be direct, local and not just through Wall Street. Direct support to localities should be at a level commensurate with the scale of the foreclosure crisis—not just one percent of the largesse while Wall Street cleans up.

CONCLUSION

This approach makes sense as real estate markets are local. There is a greater likelihood that units will be turned around more responsibly and expeditiously at the local level. Wall Street is too far away. And they are already hawking their disgusting "land contracts" to move foreclosed units which are further blighting troubled neighborhoods.

Let's democratize this bond offering in community after community. Let's not give it away to the same Wall Street crowd that bleeds us time and again, but pays us no respect. Franklin Roosevelt understood the difference between money and wealth. He was about creating wealth in community after community, household after household, not letting Wall Street raid us dry. This Congress should remember how his policies built a middle class. We should champion that democratic vision of capitalism. It's long overdue. As this bill moves to the Senate, perhaps someone there will remember what representative democracy is all about and make this a much better bill. My vote is cast for the American people and against the malefactors of wealth.

ADDENDUM

FANNIE MAE AND FREDDIE MAC

A Better Approach: Based upon Treasury Secretary Paulson's emergency announcement and proposal on July 13, 2008, "The two companies could issue their own debt and exchange it for loans from the government—at least the American people might yield something rather than giving wall street the equivalent of having access to the printing press." (Source: The Economist, July 19th–25th, 2008)

Additional Facts: According to a Federal Reserve economist, because the U.S. government has essentially guaranteed Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac's debt, the ability of home buyers to borrow has remained difficult, while the savings Fannie and Freddie have realized—about $79 billion—instead went straight to their shareholders. (Source: The Economist, July 19th–25th, 2008)

Current regulation, "allowed Fannie and Freddie to operate with tiny amounts of capital. Their capital reserves (as defined by the regulator, Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight [OFHEO]) of $83.2 billion at the end of 2007 supported $5.2 trillion of debt and guarantees, a ratio of 65 to one." Imagine if a household earned $83,000 a year and was able to borrow $5.2 billion on that salary.

In 1998 Freddie Mac owned $25 billion of other securities, according to OFHEO and by the end of 2007 it had $267 billion. Fannie Mae's outside portfolio grew from $18.5 billion in 1997 to $127.8 billion at the end of 2007. This shift in investing in outside securities does not meet Fannie and Freddie's core mission of increasing home ownership.

OFHEO as recently as July 10th said that both Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac had enough capital.

Freddie Mac lost $3.5 billion in 2007; Fannie Mae reported a $2.2 billion loss in the first quarter, having lost $2.05 billion in 2007. Each had credit-related write-downs of between $5 billion and $5 billion last year.

Currently, Freddie Mac only has a market value of $5.3 billion.

On a fair-value basis, Freddie Mac had a negative net worth of $5.2 billion at the end of the first quarter.

FANNIE MAE AND FREDDIE MAC'S DEBT AND FOREIGN OWNERSHIP

"Paulson said the Fannie and Freddie have issued $5 trillion in debt and mortgage backed securities. Of that amount more than $3 trillion is held by U.S. financial institutions and over $1.5 trillion is held by foreign institutions." (AP; Crutsinger, July 22, 2008)

Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac's foreign debt has tripled from $504 billion in 2001 to $1.5 trillion in 2007. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac's $1.5 trillion foreign debt is owned by China $376 billion, Japan $228 billion, Russia $75 billion, South Korea $63 billion, and Middle Eastern Oil-Exporters $29 billion. Now, both interest and principal is owed to foreign bondholders.

The current proposal will allow Bank of America to purchase Countrywide's portfolio. Then if Bank of America works out a refinancing, FHA stands ready to insure it. If the owner fails to make payments, FHA assumes the unit. This is a great bonanza for Bank of America.

WHAT THE LEGISLATION NEEDS

A better solution would be to let Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac issue debt and then exchange that for a government loan. At least our people would get something back on the upside—just as America did when Chrysler Corporation was refinanced through redeemable warrants.

Democratize the bond offerings by diverting some of the securitized debt that is intended to prop up Wall Street, Fannie Mae, and Freddie Mac. Direct it to Main Street—our counties, our cities, our housing agencies and authorities. Make the approach more equitable to the taxpayer. This approach allows communities, not only corporations, mega-banks, and investment houses, to actually own something. Isn't that a value worth fighting for?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I thank the gentlelady from Ohio for supporting this measure to make sure that this rule does not pass and that the American taxpayer is not put on the hook for $5 trillion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I will go ahead and close with the understanding that the gentlewoman is at that point in her presentation, also. Seeing an affirmation, I will go ahead and close.

Mr. Speaker, since taking control of this House, this Democrat Congress has totally neglected its responsibilities to address the domestic supply issues that have created the skyrocketing gas, diesel and energy costs that American families today are facing.

Today, they are proving that they can move a bill—like this housing bill—quickly when they choose to do so. However, they do not believe that the energy crisis facing American families and businesses is important enough to treat it with the same level of seriousness.

So today I urge my colleagues to vote with me to defeat the previous question so this House can finally consider real solutions to the rising energy costs in addition to this housing and GSE legislation.

If the previous question is defeated, I will move to amend the rule to allow for additional consideration of H.R. 6566, the American Energy Act. This bill would increase the supply of American-made energy, improve conservation and efficiency, and promote new and expanded energy technologies to help lower the price at the pump and help reduce America's increasing costly and dangerous dependence on foreign sources of energy.

I encourage everyone that believes that a comprehensive solution to solving this energy crisis and achieving energy independence includes increasing the supply of American energy should vote to defeat this rule and the previous question.

I ask unanimous consent to have the text of this amendment and extraneous material inserted in the RECORD prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, we have given lots of reasons about ways we can make this bill better. The ways we can make it better is to make sure that what we do today is carefully understood, that we do not pass on to future taxpayers billions of dollars, and to any administration the opportunity simply to hand out money without an understanding and an expectation of performance.

Mr. Speaker, we've outlined our reasons today. We need to make sure that the Members of Congress who will vote today understand that opposing this bill and sending it back and making it better is the right thing to do. We also need to make sure that we take care of the American consumer who is having increasing problems paying their bills, not just their housing bills, but also at the gas pump.

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

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the American Housing Rescue and Foreclosure Prevention Act and this rule, as families across America are in the grips of a housing crisis and it demands expeditious action.

The President of the United States says it's necessary. The Governors in this great Nation say it's necessary, and I will submit their statements into the RECORD.

Foreclosures are way up, and the options for safe, clean, and affordable housing are down. In my home town of Tampa, Florida, one in 280 homes is in foreclosure. Now, as Rules Committee Chairwoman SLAUGHTER said, we're going to clean up this mess because America's hardworking families are depending on us, but we will also need to follow up and hold those accountable who have created this mess.

Now, the House of Representatives over the past 1½ years have passed bills to help homeowners avoid foreclosure, provide resources to local communities to build new, safe and affordable housing, and crack down on predatory lenders. It has all come to fruition here today.

Our efforts will keep the American dream of homeownership available to more American families, thanks to the efforts of Speaker NANCY PELOSI, Chairman BARNEY FRANK and Chairwoman MAXINE WATERS, and the other champions for America's families who are going to continue to side with them, and our commitment to affordable housing and safe and healthy communities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a ''yes'' vote on the previous question and the rule.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET,
Washington, DC., July 23, 2008.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 3221—HOUSING AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACT OF 2008, (REP. FRANK (D) MA).

The Administration supports House passage of H.R. 3221 as amended. This legislation contains several critically important provisions that the Administration strongly supports, as well as others the Administration opposes. With Congress about to begin its scheduled summer recess, it is important that the desirable aspects of this bill be enacted expeditiously into law, despite the Administration's concerns about other provisions in the legislation.

The Administration strongly supports the bill's provisions to increase market confidence in the housing government-sponsored enterprises (GSEs) and to aid the stability of the financial system by providing the Treasury Department with the temporary authority to assure the GSEs continued access to liquidity and capital. In addition, the Administration strongly supports the creation of a stronger and more effective regulatory regime for the GSEs.

For nearly five years, the Administration has sought legislation to reform the regulation of the GSEs, particularly Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. On numerous occasions, the Administration has made clear the importance of ensuring that the regulator of these enterprises has powers commensurate with the GSE's size and importance. This bill provides those necessary powers: it enables the new regulator to set both minimum and risk-based capital requirements; directs the regulator to evaluate the GSEs' retained mortgage portfolios in the context of their risk and housing mission; and provides the new regulator with receivership authority, in the event that an insolvent GSE must be liquidated in an orderly fashion.

As communicated in previous Statements of Administration Policy, the Administration has concerns with several of the other provisions in this bill. It is disappointing that Congress did not remove these objectionable provisions before adjourning for the month of August. While this bill should have been improved, the temporary Treasury authorities and GSE reform provisions are too important to the stability of our Nation's housing market, financial system, and the broader economy not to be enacted immediately. For these reasons, the Administration supports passage of H.R. 3221 as amended.

NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, July 22, 2008.

THE PRESIDENT,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: The nation's governors urge Congress and the Administration to complete work on legislation to assist at-risk homeowners facing foreclosure, reform and stabilize government-sponsored mortgage financing enterprises (GSEs), and strengthen housing markets.

While housing foreclosures have affected all states differently, those most negatively affected have responded by using a variety of policy tools to help homeowners in distress. Ultimately, no state will be immune from the cascading effects of this challenge, and its national implications for citizens, communities, and state and local governments justify immediate federal action.

To that end, governors continue to support a voluntary mortgage-refinancing program backed by Federal Housing Administration insurance that will prevent further foreclosures. Second, while governors acknowledge that any federal action should avoid unintended consequences that could make current conditions worse in the long-term, a one-time federal outlay to support the acquisition and rehabilitation of foreclosed properties is vital to stabilize home values and protect neighborhoods. Federal funds should flow directly through states, and states should have flexibility to contract with local governments and nonprofit partners to implement tailored strategies. Such federal pecuniary assistance should be allocated based on the degree of need in each state. Third, any federal action should avoid changes that shift costs to states, preempt state authority to protect the public, or impose new unfunded mandates. Such federal actions undermine state efforts to maintain services, balance budgets, and speed economic recovery.

Finally, governors commend federal efforts to restore market confidence in the GSEs through the use of targeted and temporary tools. The roles of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac remain critical to the housing markets in the states.

We look forward to working with Congress and the Administration to stabilize neighborhoods, protect the equity of homeowners, and set the economy onto a path of sustained growth and prosperity.

Sincerely,

GOVERNOR JON S. CORZINE,
Chair, Economic Development and Commerce Committee.

GOVERNOR M. MICHAEL ROUNDS,
Vice Chair, Economic Development and Commerce Committee.

NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, July 22, 2008.

The Hon. HARRY M. REID,
Majority Leader,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

The Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

The Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

The Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Minority Leader,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR REID, SENATOR MCCONNELL, SPEAKER PELOSI, AND REPRESENTATIVE BOEHNER: The nation's governors urge Congress and the Administration to complete work on legislation to assist at-risk homeowners facing foreclosure, reform and stabilize government-sponsored mortgage financing enterprises (GSEs), and strengthen housing markets.

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GOVERNOR JON S. CORZINE,
Chair, Economic Development and Commerce Committee.

GOVERNOR M. MICHAEL ROUNDS,
Vice Chair, Economic Development and Commerce Committee.

NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, July 22, 2008.

The Hon. CHRISTOPHER J. DODD,
Chairman, Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
The Hon. BARNEY FRANK,
Chairman, Committee on Financial Services,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
The Hon. RICHARD C. SHELBY,
Ranking Member, Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
The Hon. SPENCER BACHUS,
Ranking Member, Committee on Financial Services,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN DODD, SENATOR SHELBY, CHAIRMAN FRANK, and REPRESENTATIVE BACHUS: The nation's governors urge Congress and the Administration to complete work on legislation to assist at-risk homeowners facing foreclosure, reform and stabilize government-sponsored mortgage financing enterprises (GSEs), and strengthen housing markets.

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Sincerely,

GOVERNOR JON S. CORZINE,
Chair, Economic Development and Commerce Committee.
GOVERNOR M. MICHAEL ROUNDS,
Vice Chair, Economic Development and Commerce Committee.

The material previously referred to by Mr. SESSIONS is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 1363 OFFERED BY MR. SESSIONS OF TEXAS

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 4. Immediately upon the adoption of this resolution the House shall, without intervention of any point of order, consider in the House the bill (H.R. 6566) to bring down energy prices by increasing safe, domestic production, encouraging the development of alternative and renewable energy, and promoting conservation. All points of order against the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate on the bill equally divided and controlled by the majority and minority leaders, and (2) an amendment in the nature of a substitute if offered by the majority leader or his designee, which shall be considered as read and shall be separately debatable for 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

(The information contained herein was provided by Democratic Minority on multiple occasions throughout the 109th Congress.)

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Democratic majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives, (VI, 308–311) describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

Because the vote today may look bad for the Democratic majority they will say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the definition of the previous question used in the Floor Procedures Manual published by the Rules Committee in the 109th Congress, (page 56). Here's how the Rules Committee described the rule using information from Congressional Quarterly's ''American Congressional Dictionary'': ''If the previous question is defeated, control of debate shifts to the leading opposition member (usually the minority Floor Manager) who then manages an hour of debate and may offer a germane amendment to the pending business.''

Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Democratic majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

THE AMERICAN ENERGY ACT: REDUCING THE PRICE AT THE PUMP THROUGH AN ''ALL OF THE ABOVE'' ENERGY STRATEGY

House Republicans have transformed their ''all-of-the-above'' energy strategy into a single piece of legislation: The American Energy Act. The bill—a product made possible by energy policies proposed by Members throughout the House Republican Conference—will increase the supply of American-made energy, improve conservation and efficiency, and promote new and expanding energy technologies to help lower the price at the pump and reduce America's increasingly costly and dangerous dependence on foreign sources of energy.

Bipartisan passage of the American Energy Act would demonstrate to the world that America will no longer keep its rich energy resources under lock-and-key. Not only will it help bring down the price of gasoline now, but it will make needed investments in the alternative fuels that will power our lives and our economy in the future. Following is a brief summary of the American Energy Act:

To increase the supply of American-made energy in environmentally sound ways, the legislation will:

Open our deep water ocean resources, which will provide an additional three million barrels of oil per day, as well as 76 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, as proposed in H.R. 6108 by Rep. Sue Myrick (R–NC). Rep. John Peterson (R–PA) has also worked tirelessly on this issue;

Open the Arctic coastal plain, which will provide an additional one million barrels of oil per day, as proposed in H.R. 6107 by Rep. Don Young (R–AK);

Allow development of our nation's shale oil resources, which could provide an additional 2.5 million barrels of oil per day, as proposed in H.R. 6138 by Rep. Fred Upton (R–MI); and

Increase the supply of gas at the pump by cutting bureaucratic red tape that essentially blocks construction of new refineries, as proposed in H.R. 6139 by Reps. Heather Wilson (R–NM) and Joe Pitts (R–PA).

To improve energy conservation and efficiency, the legislation will:

Provide tax incentives for businesses and families that purchase more fuel efficient vehicles, as proposed in H.R. 1618 and H.R. 765 by Reps. Dave Camp (R–MI) and Jerry Weller (R–IL);

Provide a monetary prize for developing the first economically feasible, super-fuel-efficient vehicle reaching 100 miles-per-gallon, as proposed in H.R. 6384 by Rep. Rob Bishop (R–UT); and

Provide tax incentives for businesses and homeowners who improve their energy efficiency, as proposed in H.R. 5984 by Reps. Roscoe Bartlett (R–MD) and Phil English (R–PA) and in H.R. 778 by Rep. Jerry Weller (R–IL).

To promote renewable and alternative energy technologies, the legislation will:

Spur the development of alternative fuels through government contracting by repealing the ''Section 526'' prohibition on government purchasing of alternative energy and promoting coal-to-liquids technology, as proposed in H.R. 5656 by Rep. Jeb Hensarling (R–TX), in H.R. 6384 by Rob Bishop (R–UT), and in H.R. 2208 by Rep. John Shimkus (R–IL);

Establish a renewable energy trust fund using revenues generated by exploration in the deep ocean and on the Arctic coastal plain, as proposed by Rep. Devin Nunes (R–CA);

Permanently extend the tax credit for alternative energy production, including wind, solar and hydrogen, as proposed in H.R. 2652 by Rep. Phil English (R–PA) and in H.R. 5984 by Rep. Roscoe Bartlett (R–MD); and

Eliminate barriers to the expansion of emission-free nuclear power production, as proposed in H.R. 6384 by Rep. Rob Bishop (R–UT).

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SESSIONS. 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, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to adjourn.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. SESSIONS. 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, this 15-minute vote on the motion to adjourn will be followed by a 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 1363 and 5-minute votes on:

Adopting H. Res. 1363, if ordered, and

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 6532.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 20, nays 400, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 515]

YEAS—20

Bartlett (MD)
Blackburn
Cannon
Deal (GA)
Delahunt
Emerson
English (PA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
King (IA)
Marchant
Myrick
Petri
Sessions
Shadegg
Shimkus
Souder
Tancredo
Thornberry
Young (AK)

NAYS—400

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boren
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Cazayoux
Chabot
Chandler
Childers
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards (MD)
Edwards (TX)
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foster
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Olver
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sestak
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Speier
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield (KY)
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wittman (VA)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—14

Barton (TX)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Boswell
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Green, Gene
Hare
Hulshof
Kind
Obey
Ortiz
Rush
Sullivan
Wilson (SC)

□ 1322

Messrs. EHLERS, CONAWAY, BERRY, McKEON, DOGGETT, CLEAVER, GRIJALVA, ELLSWORTH, JOHNSON of Georgia, DICKS, CULBERSON, LANGEVIN, ABERCROMBIE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. CLARKE, Mrs. McCARTHY of New York, and Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the motion to adjourn was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO HOUSE AMENDMENTS TO SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 3221, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACT OF 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on House Resolution 1363, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 226, nays 183, not voting 25, as follows:

[Roll No. 516]

YEAS—226

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Becerra
Berkley
Berry
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Castor
Cazayoux
Chandler
Childers
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver