

sitting around. Americans are struggling to make ends meet. I ask my colleagues not to raise taxes on those who can least afford it.

ENERGY BILL IS A WIN-WIN FOR AMERICANS

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the energy bill that the House Energy and Commerce Committee is about to finish marking up today is a win-win situation for Americans. First of all, it achieves energy independence, which is so important for our national security. At the same time, it basically helps in a significant way to reduce pollution. We know about global climate change. We know we must address it in a significant way.

But even more important, I want to stress the job creation. The fact of the matter is, it will create a lot of jobs by investing in new renewable technologies, such as solar power, wind power, geothermal. Imagine this: In one piece of legislation, which will come to the House when we come back after Memorial Day, we will be able to make headway towards energy independence, not rely on foreign oil, create jobs in new industries and new technologies, and also address the problem of global climate change.

The fact of the matter is, it's a win-win situation for the American people. It is something that most of my constituents have been clamoring for for a long time. Once again, this new Congress and this President will achieve a major victory for the American people.

CAP-AND-TAX WILL CAP OUR GROWTH AND TRADE OUR JOBS

(Mr. FLEMING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, the crazy cap-and-tax idea advanced by my liberal colleagues would create \$640 billion in new taxes on American businesses and raise electrical bills by \$3,100 per household per year. This cap-and-tax proposal creates an artificial market to find revenue to pay for various social programs that this administration plans to enact, such as government takeover of our health care. This boondoggle will cap our growth and trade our jobs. Companies looking to invest in our economy will simply move overseas to escape this enormous tax increase.

You don't believe me? Look in the crystal ball at Spain, which has been on this plan for 10 years. After losing a number of companies, seeing utility prices skyrocket and suffering a 17.5 percent unemployment rate, we can see our future clearly. Even worse, experts tell us that cap-and-tax will do nothing to cap greenhouse gases, but it will put the United States at a global economic disadvantage because China and India

will ignore this scheme. In fact, it will also serve as an economic stimulus for all developing countries which will be happy to accept our jobs.

Why not use common sense for a change and develop true renewable resources as well as nuclear power, which has a zero carbon footprint?

AMERICAN ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

(Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent one of the greenest districts in America, thanks to our hydroelectric dams that produce 70 percent of our electricity in Washington State. When you combine that with nuclear and wind and solar and biomass, we have one of the smallest carbon footprints in the country. Yet cap-and-trade would penalize Washington State, too, forcing us to pay higher costs for our energy. A Federal judge in Portland is proposing, or wants us to consider at least, removing the four lower Snake River dams that provide 5 percent of our electricity.

Mr. Speaker, we need to stop saying no to American energy and start saying yes to American energy. We need to unleash American energy producers and not implement policies that are actually going to hurt our economy, trade our jobs and cause them to go overseas make us more dependent on foreign sources of energy.

Let's say yes to American energy. Let's say yes to American energy independence.

INVESTING IN ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

(Mrs. CAPITO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, last summer's run-up in gasoline prices highlighted for all of us the challenges that face our Nation because we have not embraced a wide range of our own energy resources. With that premise in mind, I've joined with my Republican and Democrat colleagues to craft an energy bill that will invest in alternative energy, promote new technology and encourage conservation—all without raising taxes on consumers.

Instead of penalizing domestic energy production with a national energy tax like the one moving through our Energy and Commerce Committee, we need to use our royalties from offshore energy exploration to fund investments in new cleaner energy technologies. That means renewable, nuclear, environmental restoration and clean water efforts.

In addition, this bill reflects the fact that coal is one of our most abundant resources. Based on current energy prices, we could see up to \$220 billion to

invest in clean coal reserves from royalty revenue from this bill.

Simply put, this bill helps us cleanly take advantage of our immense domestic resources and provides incentives for lower emissions without imposing a burdensome national energy tax on everyday consumers. Remember, energy policy has real costs for real people.

□ 1030

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 454, WEAPON SYSTEM ACQUISITION REFORM ACT OF 2009

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 463 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 463

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (S. 454) to improve the organization and procedures of the Department of Defense for the acquisition of major weapon systems, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

SEC. 2. The Chair may postpone further consideration of the conference report to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GUTIERREZ). The gentlewoman from Maine is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. I also ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 463 provides for consideration of the conference report to accompany S. 454, the WASTE TKO Act of 2009.

Mr. Speaker, today the House will consider the conference report to accompany S. 454, the Weapon System Acquisition Reform Act of 2009. Last week, the House took an important step toward sending this legislation to the President when it passed H.R. 2101, the WASTE TKO Act of 2009, as amended, by a vote of 428-0. I would like to thank my colleagues on the House Armed Services Committee, Chairman SKELTON, Ranking Member McHUGH, Representative ANDREWS, and Representative CONAWAY, for their tireless work on this bill.

The conference report before us today includes three key provisions from H.R. 2101. First, it requires the Secretary of Defense to designate one official as the principal expert on performance assessment in acquisition.

Second, the agreement mandates that weapons systems which are not meeting the standards set in statute or which have incurred critical Nunn-McCurdy breaches will receive additional reviews, along with increased oversight from Congress and the necessary corrective measures to ensure that these programs succeed.

Lastly, the agreement requires the Department of Defense to develop a system for tracking cost growth and schedule changes before a weapons systems moves into the systems development phase.

With these key provisions, the conference agreement includes the strengths, ideas, hard work, and spirit of both H.R. 2101 and S. 454. It is the culmination of the thoughtful and thorough efforts of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, and it is a noteworthy example of what the Congress can accomplish with a focused bipartisan and bicameral effort.

However, while I am proud of my colleagues, I am truly excited about what this legislation will accomplish on behalf of the American people. According to the GAO, the Department of Defense is the largest buying enterprise in the world. What this means is that the American taxpayer is truly invested, in every sense of the word, in the capability, efficiency, and accountability of the Department of Defense.

In March 2009, the GAO identified \$296 billion in cumulative cost growth on 96 major defense acquisition programs. Mr. Speaker, let me put this in perspective. We are spending more on cost overruns than the amount that we spend on salaries and health care for the entire American military for 2 full years.

The GAO also found that these major weapons programs were behind schedule, on average, by 22 months.

This is shocking and unacceptable to the American public, especially in such challenging economic times. We can do better than this. We can do better than \$300 billion over budget and nearly 2 years behind schedule at a time when our Nation's resources are limited, our men and women in uniform are in harm's way, and our family budgets are being cut back to provide only the bare necessities.

In my home State, Mainers have always lived with an ethic of hard work, a spirit of responsibility, and a determination to provide the best they can with what they have.

This legislation was crafted in that very same spirit. By ensuring accurate assessments in the performance of a weapons systems and accurate assessments in its cost, a taxpayer can be certain that they are getting the best bang for their buck by providing "intensive care" for sick programs, and

our soldiers can be assured that they receive the necessary capabilities and appropriate technology to defend our country and themselves. In short, this legislation keeps the taxpayer in mind and the men and women of the Armed Forces at heart.

I look forward to completing the work on this bill.

And I reserve the balance of my time. Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by expressing my appreciation to my very good friend and new colleague from Maine for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by apologizing for being tardy as I came to the floor here. I was downstairs meeting with the very distinguished Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, Ronald George's colleague, Justice Ming Chin, and several other staff members about very important foster care programs, and so I appreciate the understanding of the House as I was making my way through the corridors and up here to the House floor.

This is very important legislation that we are addressing today, Mr. Speaker. As was said in the testimony delivered by both the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, our friend from Lexington, Missouri, Mr. SKELTON, and the very distinguished ranking member, Mr. McHUGH, this really is Congress at its best. We share a strong commitment to our Nation's national security. I know that the President of the United States is delivering a speech at the Archives about the very great importance of national security and its relationship to the very important civil rights that the American people cherish and revere.

I know that it is an ongoing challenge, but as we deal with the issue of national security and our Nation's Armed Services, it is important for us to do everything that we can to ensure that we have a cost-effective national defense. When we are debating defense issues, Mr. Speaker, I regularly like to say the five most important words in the middle of the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution are "provide for the common defense." And I point to those because when one thinks about virtually everything that the Federal Government does, most all of it could be handled either by family members and local communities, at the city level, at the county level, and at the State level. But there is one thing that cannot be handled by families, communities, cities, counties, or States, and that is the national security of the United States of America. That is solely a Federal responsibility. And that is why I believe when we look at what we as a Congress are doing, as the Federal legislature is doing, it seems to me that our responsibility is to do everything that we can to provide for the

common defense as directed in the Preamble of the Constitution.

As we do that, we have to recognize that there is a great deal of attention focused, Mr. Speaker, on the challenging economic times that we face. In fact, many people today are arguing, and we might have a tendency to say, that our number one priority is dealing with getting our economy back on track. And it is clearly what we are spending most of our time and effort discussing and debating as to which path we take to get our economy back on track. But we cannot forget that as important as it is for us to get our economy back on track, it comes in second to our national security. Some argue that if we spend too much money on national defense what is it that we would lose? We lose some money. If we spend too little on our national security, what is it that we lose? We lose this very precious experiment known as the United States of America.

Today, as we look at the challenges that exist around the world, the fact is that unlike wars in the past—and I did a telephone town hall meeting last night and was discussing this with a number of my constituents, who pointed to the fact that we don't have adversaries who are wearing uniforms or represent a nation. As we continue to try to work in a bipartisan way to prosecute this war against radical extremism, we have conflicts today that are much different than those that we as a Nation had faced in the past. But we also, as I said, are facing extraordinarily difficult economic times.

And that gets to the very point of this legislation. While we say we want a strong national defense, I always like to have that little caveat, "cost effective." We want to make sure that we have a cost-effective national defense. I'm looking at my colleague from New Jersey, my new colleague from Maine, and I don't know if they were here, I know my colleague from Maine wasn't here, I don't know if my colleague from New Jersey was here, but we had raging debates that took place in this institution over \$600 hammers and items that people could clearly look at as being horrible examples of wasteful spending. And they were tangible items that they could see. I mean, \$600 for a hammer, whatever it was, \$800 for a toilet seat, those kind of things that came out in the news back then, they led to understandable outrage on the part of the American people, and it was reflected in this Congress. And so we tried to turn the corner, making sure that we had a more cost-effective national defense when it came to those issues.

Again, I always say when you talk about smaller levels of spending, people can relate to them more. What we are here dealing with today are ways in which we can bring about reductions in spending for massive large weapons systems. That is what this is all about, putting into place a structure that will allow that to happen.

That is why I am so pleased that Mr. MCHUGH was able to join with Mr. SKELTON and our colleagues in the Senate as well, Senators LEVIN and MCCAIN, and work very hard on this. They came together with a bipartisan recommendation. It was reported out of this House by a vote of 428-0. And I don't recall for sure, I think it must have been unanimous in the Senate as well. I don't know if they had a recorded vote over there. But I do remember the vote that we had here.

So here we are today dealing with an area of complete agreement. I will say procedurally this conference report could have been passed without either of us taking the time of the Rules Committee or standing here. All I would have done, all my friend from Maine would do, as Rules Committee members, we wouldn't have done it, we would just have Mr. SKELTON and Mr. MCHUGH stand up, and Mr. SKELTON could propound a unanimous consent request that this conference report be adopted, and it would be adopted unanimously.

So I will say procedurally, it is great to have a chance to stand here and talk to my colleagues, Mr. Speaker. I enjoy it probably more than they. But the fact is we don't need to be here doing this because there is agreement. But it is, I believe, important to focus on the fact that we have been able to work in a bipartisan way to do everything possible to bring about a more cost-effective national defense.

And when you think about cost effectiveness, it means that resources will be able to be utilized for something that we all hold near and dear, and that is the men and women in uniform that are out there. I remember in debate we had last week one of the amendments that unfortunately was not made in order was an amendment by my colleague from Illinois, Mrs. BIGGERT, who wanted to have an increase in compensation for our men and women in uniform. I strongly supported her right to offer that amendment, and I would have supported that amendment. I suspect my colleagues would have as well if we had had that amendment made in order.

The fact that we are going to be able to save, and I asked Mr. SKELTON and Mr. MCHUGH last night what they believe we would be able to save quantifiably with this, and numbers in excess of hundreds of billions of dollars were the kinds of numbers thrown out. And so I hope very much that we are able to do that and that those resources will be able to be used for a much greater purpose, and that is for our men and women in uniform who need the kind of continued support that we can give in this institution.

So Mr. Speaker, I am strongly supportive of this legislation. I congratulate my Democratic and Republican colleagues for working together on this, and by virtue of that, I will be supportive of the standard conference report rule that we have here which

will allow for 1 hour of debate for the managers of the legislation, and then we will be able to proceed with something that is, I suspect, more controversial as we come back after the break.

□ 1045

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I first want to say to my good friend and colleague from California, I, too, agree that it is nice to be on the floor talking about a wonderful bipartisan effort and having such agreement on an issue that is very important to the people of this country.

Mr. Speaker, at this moment, I'd like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS), a member of the Armed Services Committee who did considerable work on the issue we're talking about today and made it possible for us to bring it to the floor.

(Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady for yielding. I thank my friend from California and all the members of the Rules Committee for their cooperation in bringing this conference report to the floor.

We will later speak about the merits substantively on this legislation, but I do think my friend from California's remarks merit a comment because I think this is a victory for the institution as well. This is an institutional process that benefits us as an institution.

There was a panel created by Chairman SKELTON and Mr. MCHUGH that Mr. CONAWAY and I were fortunate enough to lead that helped generate this legislation. We had open hearings. It was followed by two full committee hearings that touched on the subject, followed by an open, full committee markup in the Armed Services Committee, followed by an opportunity on the floor under the suspension rules because it was not controversial for us to go forward, followed by very diligent work in the conference committee, for which we'd like to thank from the other body Chairman LEVIN and Senator MCCAIN and their colleagues, followed by this floor debate.

The media dwell on our situations where we disagree with each other, and disagreement is healthy in democracy. It's very important for us to highlight times when we agree with each other, when the process works as it should. This is one of those times, and I would like to thank and congratulate all Members of both bodies, particularly the Rules Committee, for facilitating this success here today.

Thank you.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I don't have any other requests for time. As I said, there's no controversy on this rule. It's something that could have been done. So I'll reserve the balance of my time and see if my colleague has any speakers.

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. I will reserve my time until the gentleman has closed. I have no other speakers.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as I have said, I believe that this is the institution at its best. My friend from New Jersey has pointed out the work that he and Mr. CONAWAY did. I congratulate them for their tireless efforts in dealing with this, and I hope that we are able to save hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of billions of dollars that can go for a much better purpose than the kind of waste that obviously has come forward in the past; but at the same time, it is of the utmost importance that we make sure that in so doing that we don't in any way take a retrograde step on the national security capabilities of the United States of America.

And I believe passionately that as we look at these challenges that exist around the world, it is a very, very dangerous place, this planet, and we are the world's only complete superpower: militarily, economically, and geopolitically. And we are going through trying times here in the United States and around the world economically, and I know that the weakened economy could enhance the likelihood of greater military challenges ahead.

And so as the work proceeds of these two entities that are being put into place at the Pentagon, I know that they will not in any way take steps that diminish our capability to defend the United States of America or our interests around the world.

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

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, as my good friend from California has mentioned, we have some essential responsibilities as Members of Congress. Our constituents have charged us with several responsibilities. It would be impossible to list them all today, but I think it is essential to highlight three of those charges.

Our constituents have charged Congress with keeping our country safe and secure, from both the threats of today and the threats of tomorrow. Our constituents have asked to stand up for and defend our men and women in uniform, just as our men and women in uniform have defended us. And our constituents have asked us to spend their tax dollars in a way that is prudent, productive, and responsible.

Today, we take a step forward in living up to these responsibilities as the House considers the conference report for S. 454, the Weapon System Acquisition Reform Act of 2009. I urge a "yes" vote on the previous question and on the rule.

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

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 915, FAA REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 464 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 464

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 915) to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2009 through 2012, to improve aviation safety and capacity, to provide stable funding for the national aviation system, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. General debate shall be confined to the bill and the amendment considered as adopted by this resolution and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure now printed in the bill, the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, modified by the amendment printed in part B of such report, shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as the original bill for the purpose of further amendment under the five-minute rule and shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in part C of the report of the Committee on Rules. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill, as amended, to the House with such further amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. The chair of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure is authorized, on behalf of the committee, to file a supplemental report to accompany H.R. 915.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman

from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ARCURI. I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 464 provides for a structured rule for consideration of H.R. 915, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2009.

I would like to acknowledge Chairman OBERSTAR and Ranking Member MICA of the full Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and Chairman COSTELLO and Ranking Member PETRI of the Aviation Subcommittee and thank them for their bipartisan work on H.R. 915. As a member of the full committee, I take great pride in being a part of the cooperative atmosphere, and I believe that it yields positive results, both for Congress and the American people.

Mr. Speaker, we are here today to consider H.R. 915, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2009. In many ways, it is unfortunate that we must consider this bill because the reauthorization of the FAA and its programs expired over 3 years ago. The House passed a reauthorization bill in September of 2007 that was very similar to the measure we will consider today. Unfortunately, the Senate was unable to move the FAA reauthorization last Congress, and so we are forced to take the lead once more, affording the Senate even more time to act than we did in the previous Congress.

The American public cannot afford to wait any longer for this legislation. The bill makes essential increases in aviation funding and safety improvements that are long overdue. In the past few months, we have seen, in New York State alone, my home, two crashes involving regional jets, and the investigations into those crashes have revealed that greater safety oversight is needed.

H.R. 915 includes a number of provisions that will make air travel safer for the American public, such as a requirement that the FAA increase the number of aviation safety inspectors and increase funding for programs that reduce runway incursions. The bill requires the FAA to inspect foreign repair stations at least twice a year and perform drug and alcohol testing on those individuals working on U.S. aircraft, to ensure that aircraft maintenance is performed in a safe and responsible manner. The bill also directs the FAA to begin an administrative rulemaking process to revise existing aircraft rescue and fire fighting standards that have not been updated in 21 years.

Many of those safety improvements come with increased costs. I have personally heard from a number of smaller airports in my district that are concerned that the cost of complying with the new fire fighting standards will pose a severe economic hardship on them, possibly causing a reduction in air service. I would like to thank Chairman OBERSTAR and Chairman COSTELLO for addressing my concerns on this matter during yesterday's Rules Committee hearing.

The provisions related to the aircraft rescue and fire fighting rulemaking specifically require that the Secretary of Transportation conduct an assessment of potential impacts associated with the revisions; that is to say, that they will review the rulemaking and make a determination on how smaller airports, if there is a question with their ability to comply, how they can comply and continue the service to the region that they represent. In addition, the rulemaking process will involve a public comment period for impacted airports to weigh in on the proposed changes.

The bill also includes increased funding that will help airports comply with these new safety measures. The bill includes \$16.2 billion over the life of the bill for the Airport Improvement Program, also known as AIP. Airports can use AIP funding to make safety improvements or purchase emergency equipment.

In addition, the bill includes an increase on the maximum passenger facility charge that airports can assess on travelers. Airports can use PFC revenue to preserve or enhance the safety, security, or capacity of the national air transportation system; to reduce or mitigate noise impacts resulting from an airport; or to provide opportunities for enhanced competition among or between carriers. In order to take advantage of this increase, major airports will have to forego a portion of their AIP funds which will be designated for projects at smaller airports.

The FAA Reauthorization Act also includes \$70 billion for the FAA's capital programs between fiscal year 2009 and fiscal year 2012 so the FAA can make needed repairs and replace some existing facilities and equipment. This will improve airline capacity and efficiency and, at the same time, improve safety, reduce environmental impacts, and increase user access.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is long overdue. The President has urged us to pass it. And it is especially timely that we approve a reauthorization of the FAA now, before the summer flight congestion and weather-related delays create even more havoc for the traveling public.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule and to support the underlying legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. I'd like to thank my friend the gentleman from New York (Mr.