

U.S. Marshal Gardner thought quickly and acted bravely in responding to the armed assault, and I wish him a speedy recovery from the wounds he received in the line of duty.

I also commend the other court security officers, U.S. marshals and the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department for their quick and courageous responses to this attack and for protecting the public and preventing further loss of life.

This resolution honors these public servants' courageous actions and Officer Cooper's legacy of bravery and selflessness. This resolution serves as a tribute, not only to Officer Cooper and to U.S. Marshal Gardner, but to all public servants who put their lives on the line daily while serving their country. I encourage my colleagues to support this measure.

If I may take an additional minute, to those of our fellow citizens who are so frustrated with their government or who are so angry with life or with what is happening in this country or in their lives, there has to be a better way than this to express your anger and frustration.

In the aftermath of these tragedies, the government continues to function; Congress continues to meet; life goes on except for the lives of the perpetrators. More often than not, they are brought down by those who protect and defend the rest of us. Their families are destroyed, and they can't figure out why their loved ones reacted in this manner, and the misery they cause to their innocent fellow citizens, who are only doing their jobs, is beyond mention.

So I say to those who are angry and frustrated, do not do this. It creates misery in this country that has no place in the United States of America.

Again, I offer Officer Cooper's family my condolences and Officer Gardner a very speedy recovery.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I spent 30 years as a prosecutor and as a judge at the courthouse in Houston, all in the criminal courts building. I am very familiar with the individuals who work in the courthouse, who protect those who come to the seat of justice, to the bar of justice to seek grievances against our government.

Throughout those years, it became obvious to me that, in our country, the way we settle disputes is at the courthouse where we have two sides, sometimes more than two sides, who show up to argue their cases. Then there is a ruling by the judge on the law. Yet sometimes, as in this case, people show up at the courthouse and wish to take matters into their own hands in a violent manner.

We have folks at the courthouse who protect us, not just the lawyers and judges, but to protect those people who come to the courthouse to seek justice. Those people in our system are called the security officers, or bailiffs, as they are called in Texas.

More than once, unfortunately, I have had the unfortunate opportunity

of having seen people disagree with what took place in the courthouse and of having seen them get out of control. Yet those security officers, those bailiffs, those deputy sheriffs were there to protect the seat of justice. These are examples of two of those. One was killed, and one was wounded in making sure that justice prevails in our justice system and that the law is not taken advantage of in a violent manner.

So we honor those individuals, not just these two but the others who helped from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and all of those court officers who work every day in every courthouse in the United States to make sure we have a secure and a safe justice system.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, January 4, 2010, was a Monday morning, the first Monday morning of the new year. This incident happened that morning.

Monday mornings are always very busy, if not the busiest times, at courthouses throughout America. People are coming in to litigate their disputes, to answer calendar calls, to answer trial calendars. There are witnesses who have been subpoenaed. There are jurors who have come to court, having been notified that they need to be there. There are courthouse workers.

Of course, you pass through security. It's just like we do here at the United States Capitol and in our legislative office buildings. We pass through security. Sometimes, when people are in a hurry, they get a little antsy, and they take that out on the security officials.

Though, I will tell you, despite all that was ongoing on that morning, Judge POE, as you well know of these things that I just spoke of, on that day, a madman entered the courthouse and struck at a very soft part of security, which is when you walk right in the door and before you go through security. In the midst of all of that activity going on, he killed Officer Stanley Cooper, and he wounded Marshal Joe Gardner. Had it not been for their selfless and professional conduct at the time, there is no doubt that others could have lost their lives or could have been wounded as well.

So everywhere we have security checkpoints, the officers who man those checkpoints deserve our respect. They deserve our cooperation. They deserve our recognition as well for the fine jobs that they do. I want to take this opportunity to let all of those folks on the front lines know that we here in Congress, regardless of party affiliation, appreciate their service to us.

Lastly, we wish the family of Officer Cooper, as well as U.S. Deputy Marshal Joe Gardner and his family, the best in the future.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHN-

SON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1061.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ACCELERATING TAX BENEFITS FOR DONATIONS TO CHILE EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4783) to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of the earthquake in Chile, and to extend the period from which such contributions for the relief of victims of the earthquake in Haiti may be accelerated.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4783

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

#### SECTION 1. ACCELERATION OF INCOME TAX BENEFITS FOR CHARITABLE CASH CONTRIBUTIONS FOR RELIEF OF VICTIMS OF EARTHQUAKE IN CHILE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, a taxpayer may treat any contribution described in subsection (b) made after February 26, 2010, and on or before April 15, 2010, as if such contribution were made on December 31, 2009, and not in 2010.

(b) CONTRIBUTION DESCRIBED.—A contribution is described in this subsection if such contribution is a cash contribution made for the relief of victims in areas affected by the earthquake in Chile on February 27, 2010, for which a charitable contribution deduction is allowable under section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(c) RECORDKEEPING.—In the case of a contribution described in subsection (b), a telephone bill showing the name of the donee organization, the date of the contribution, and the amount of the contribution shall be treated as meeting the recordkeeping requirements of section 170(f)(17) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

#### SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF PERIOD FROM WHICH CHARITABLE CASH CONTRIBUTIONS FOR RELIEF OF VICTIMS OF EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI MAY BE ACCELERATED.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 1 of Public Law 111-126 is amended by striking “before March 1, 2010” and inserting “on or before April 15, 2010”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to contributions made after February 28, 2010.

#### SEC. 3. BUDGETARY PROVISIONS.

(a) STATUTORY PAYGO.—The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

(b) EMERGENCY DESIGNATION.—

(1) STATUTORY PAYGO.—This Act is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4(g) of the Statutory Pay-As-

You-Go Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-139; 2 U.S.C. 933(g)).

(2) HOUSE PAYGO RULES.—All applicable provisions in this Act are designated as an emergency for purposes of pay-as-you-go principles.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, Ranking Member DAVID CAMP is not here today because of a death in his family. The distinguished gentleman from Illinois is going to be handling the time on the minority side.

On behalf of my colleague and friend Mr. CAMP and the gentleman from Illinois, I ask that the nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation be asked to make available to the public a technical explanation of the bill. The technical explanation expresses the committee's understanding and legislative intent behind this important bill. It is available on the joint committee's Web site at [www.jct.gov](http://www.jct.gov), and it is listed under document No. JCX-08-10.

Mr. Speaker, we rise today on this very important bill. It would allow for charitable contributions paid to victims of the Chilean earthquake on or before April 15 of this year, which is the tax return deadline, to be claimed as deductions on taxpayers' 2009 tax returns. Of course, absent this change, taxpayers would need to wait until next year to claim deductions for these contributions.

In addition—and this is very important—the bill would provide taxpayers with a little more time relating to the victims of the Haitian earthquake so that they could make charitable contributions through April 15, extending it beyond March 1.

So let me, if I might, say just a few words.

I think all of us know graphically what is involved here. I checked, and the catastrophe in Haiti is the largest of its kind on record in the Western Hemisphere. We have also seen the catastrophe in Chile. I think all of us want to be sure that the American people can join together to express their alliances with the people of Chile and with the people of Haiti.

Like lots of families, our family has had a connection with both countries. My son Andy has been to Haiti many times. He was there as a monitor for one of the elections when there was immense violence, and I was concerned

for his safety. He is able to speak Creole to express his interest in Haiti. So that's one way, in addition to my service in the Foreign Aid Agency, that our family has had contact with the people of Haiti.

Yet I think all of us have had that contact with the people of Haiti since the catastrophe, the worst of its kind on record in the Western Hemisphere, and I think all of us very much want to be sure that we can express our support, our alliance and can give our charitable contributions.

As to Chile, we could see the immense devastation. That country was prepared for an earthquake of virtually any magnitude; but this magnitude, one of the very worst in the history of the country, shook up the country. It shook up its foundations in many places, and it led to the loss of many, many lives.

So I come here today on behalf of the committee and, I think, on behalf of all of us in this Congress. I believe the gentleman from Illinois and I come here today on behalf of all of the American people, and we ask that we have unanimous consent for this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to a distinguished member of the committee, my good friend and pal, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), and I ask unanimous consent that he be allowed to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1230

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

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank and congratulate Chairman LEVIN for his leadership on this issue, and particularly want to thank him for the gesture of reaching out to the minority on this and hope it is a glimpse of things to come.

As the chairman indicated, this is one of these areas that clearly all of America comes together on. There are ample examples of where we have done this in the past, obviously with the tsunami back in 2005, and most recently you had members of the Ways and Means Committee that were on the floor together urging us to change the Tax Code to accommodate the relief efforts in Haiti.

This also is really worthy of us coming together quickly in this tax season and allowing Americans to make contributions to Chile and, in fact, extending the period of time that they are able to make contributions to Haitian relief efforts, all in the context of completing their 2009 tax returns.

Why is this important? It is important because in order to bring rescue and recovery in times of great crisis, it takes more than simply the American

Government working. That is important, but it also takes the American public.

I had an event in my district, Mr. Speaker, a couple of weeks ago, where we brought together folks to discuss Haitian relief efforts. My recollection is that there was a Red Cross official who was there, and she said a very interesting thing. She said that the event in Haiti, and I know we are talking about Chile today primarily, but she said the event in Haiti had redefined what it means to be local.

I thought, Isn't that interesting? Here we have folks that have responded incredibly generously, Americans have, at the sight and the sounds and the visuals of real suffering in our part of the world, and what have they done? They have taken their checkbook out. They have written a check. They have donated online. They have donated famously on their cell phones now in overwhelming numbers. But I think it was really poignant when she said local contributions and the definition of a local tragedy has been redefined. So here we are today, Republicans and Democrats together, saying that this is an area where we need to move forward.

I know that Mr. CAMP, the ranking member from Michigan, would have been here, but, as Chairman LEVIN mentioned, he has had a death in the family and he has that obligation. I know I speak for an overwhelming majority of Republicans when saying this is an area that we should all come together on and move quickly to move this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

This has been a particularly difficult period of time for all of us as we witnessed the victims of these two enormous tragedies attempt to repair the devastation that resulted from two of the largest earthquakes that we have seen in recent times.

As we laid witness to the victims of the Haiti earthquake in January, I had a chance a couple of weeks ago to see for myself the magnitude of the devastation. As somebody who was on the scene shortly after the tsunami 5 years ago, I will say that what I saw in Haiti not only rivaled that, but was actually worse than anything I had seen in Banda Aceh or Buket or in Sri Lanka. Then, just a few weeks later, we had an earthquake even larger, an 8.8, rock the country of Chile.

But through these tragedies, one thing is abundantly clear, and that is the generosity and compassion of the American people being as strong as ever. It is hard to explain, really, the impact that we see of these dedicated volunteers on the ground, moving to provide services that in some cases were not available at all prior to the tragedy.

Then looking at the earthquake in Chile last week, the outpouring of

American support is even more remarkable, given the fact that everybody put all these resources just a few days before into Haiti. Clearly, there is no compassion fatigue on the part of the American public.

We need to take a step back and realize that we are talking about almost a quarter million people who have died between the two, and over 1 million people displaced, and we are still finding the definition of the problem. Particularly as it relates to Haiti, we are going to find that the death toll is likely to grow much higher if we are not able to deal with the problems of water and sanitation.

Here again, American voluntary efforts from nongovernment organizations are providing critical services, and donations in Haiti alone have already reached \$1 billion. They enable these charitable organizations and nongovernment organizations to expedite the care and services needed for those who are injured and homeless, to help our neighbors get to safety and begin picking up the pieces and rebuilding their lives.

We must be clear that the road to recovery will not be short in either country. We know that we need to expedite anything we can for Americans to be part of that process. American families who have given to facilitate the recovery ought to know that we are working to show appreciation of that compassion to incent further actions with this adjustment.

As both my colleagues have made clear, but we need to drive home, any contribution after February 26 and before April 15 to the victims of the earthquake in Chile, people can claim these contributions, charitable contributions, on the tax return that they are preparing now for the last tax year.

In addition, the adjustment being made for Haiti, extending it to April 15, is an important addition. This is in keeping with what we did with the tsunami that struck in 2004.

There is a special provision here that I want to call note to, because we have watched the innovation take place in the charitable sector. The era of the cell phone and text messaging has made it possible for hundreds of millions of dollars of charitable contributions to be made through cell phone text messaging. It enabled people to do it conveniently and quickly. It speeded the aid along and, no doubt in my mind, it increased the amount of money that went to these people in need.

Under current law, obviously, taxpayers must receive documentation from the charity or rely on bank records to claim a deduction on their tax return, but when you are making a contribution through a text message, the only paper documentation individuals receive is from the telephone company. Right now, it is unclear whether individuals will be able to rely on a telephone bill to claim a charitable deduction. As a result of this legislation,

we are clarifying that taxpayers making charitable contributions to victims of the Haiti earthquake through the text messaging effort will be able to rely on their cell phone bill when claiming a charitable deduction.

To be clear, we all know that Americans are not doing this primarily for a tax deduction. It is the generous spirit of the American public and concern for men and women around the world who suffer from tragedy. But providing this incentive and clarifying the law makes it a little easier for the families who have given of themselves and others, and I would urge my colleagues to support its passage.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART), a great champion of freedom and hope and rescue in the Americas.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. I thank my dear friend Mr. ROSKAM for the time, and I simply rise to join my voice in praise and commendation for all those who have made possible that this resolution come to the floor. I think it speaks very highly of this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, there is no more generous nation in the world than the American Nation, the American people. One sees that generosity time and time again. As Mr. BLUMENAUER mentioned, we just saw an extraordinary outpouring of generosity toward the people of Haiti, and then we have seen another tragedy, and the American people, with regard to Chile, are demonstrating once again that extraordinary generosity.

So I think it is so appropriate, and that is why I rise to commend all of those that have made this resolution possible, to accelerate the deduction for the donations that Americans have made, extend that policy with regard to Haiti and to make it possible with regard to the donations that are being made or have been made or will be made for those who have suffered in Chile. Our hearts and our prayers go out to those who suffer in both of those neighbor, friendly nations. They are wonderful people, great friends of the United States.

Remembering the victims, I think the Congress, by this action today, not only takes a step that is consistent with the generosity of the American people, but I think makes a very commendable act. So I simply wanted to join my voice of commendation for all of those who have made this possible.

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, in a nutshell, this bill does three things then: It extends the time period for contributions to Haiti for attribution to a 2009 tax return; it extends the contribution until April 15th for contributions to Chile for relief efforts for the 2009 tax return; and, as the gentleman from Or-

egon mentioned, it cleans up this ambiguity as it relates to contributions on cell phones. It is well thought out, it is timely, there is an urgency to it, and I urge its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I would conclude by just saying that I do appreciate the rapid response of the committee, the bipartisan support, to honor the generosity of Americans in both these tragedies, to clean up the legislation and move it forward. But I hope, Mr. Speaker, that this is a symbol of a longer-term commitment on the part of this Congress, that we match the generosity of spirit of Americans and of our partners overseas. We have seen other countries step forward, along with charities and other nongovernmental organizations.

I am hopeful that we will exhibit a commitment to follow through after the initial dust has settled to be full partners with other countries, with the people in Chile and Haiti, to deal with the long and difficult recovery. Lives have been traumatized. There are still people at risk from disease. I am hopeful that we in Congress will have the support and the follow through to make sure that the United States Government is a full partner with these other critical areas to make sure that we make life hopefully return to normal as quickly as possible for the people who have suffered this devastation.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, as an original cosponsor of H.R. 4783, I rise in support of this bipartisan legislation and urge its immediate enactment to support the ongoing recovery efforts in Chile and Haiti.

This bill does two simple things. First, it allows anybody making a cash contribution for earthquake relief in Chile before April 15, 2010, to receive a charitable deduction for the qualifying contribution on their 2009 tax return. And second, it provides the same tax benefit to those wishing to support relief efforts in Haiti, by extending the original March 1, 2010, deadline for Haiti contributions to April 15, 2010, as well.

These simple steps are consistent with our nation's tradition of responding to those in need and will provide an extra incentive for generous Americans to make timely contributions to these crises when the assistance is needed most.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4783—a bill that will accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of the earthquake in Chile.

As you know, on Saturday, February 27, 2010, a massive, 8.8 magnitude earthquake, one of the largest ever recorded, struck off of the coast of Chile. An estimated 2,000,000 people, including upwards of 1,500,000 displaced persons, have been directly affected by the earthquake, the tsunami, and its aftermath. As the casualties continue to grow, there is a great deal of extensive damage to highways, bridges, apartments, and infrastructure, have led the government of Chile to declare a 'state of catastrophe.' Since the initial earthquake, there have been over 100 aftershocks, which include 8 aftershocks registering above a 6.0 magnitude. These aftershocks continue to affect the coast and the rest of the country.

According to the United States Geological Survey, Concepcion, Chile's second largest city, was 70 miles from the earthquake's epicenter and suffered some of the worst damage. Thousands of its residents initially remained cut-off from the remainder of the country without any basic necessities, such as running water and electricity. The coastal town of Dichato and its 4,000 residents were among the hardest hit and is 80 percent destroyed. 80 percent of Talcahuano's 180,000 residents living on the Chilean coast were left homeless by the earthquake. Initial estimates of damages range from \$15,000,000,000 to \$30,000,000,000, and basic necessities across the country, including electricity, clean water access, telephone access, and communication systems continue to be restored on a progressive basis in many zones.

Chile's stringent building codes, which one local architect called 'our proud building standards,' as well as the Government of Chile's ability to implement them greatly mitigated the impact of this catastrophic natural event both in terms of casualties and physical damage to the infrastructure of this country. The Government of Chile has taken significant measures to maintain order and public security in the streets in order to prevent more widespread panic and chaos as damage assessments are made and relief is delivered.

America is again responding, and will continue to respond with immediate humanitarian assistance to help the people of this struggling nation rebuild their livelihoods. I send my condolences to the people and government of Chile as they grieve once again in the aftermath of a natural disaster. As Chile's neighbor, I believe it is the United States' responsibility to help Chile recover, and build the capacity to mitigate against future disasters.

Throughout my time in Congress, I have been highly involved in strengthening the relationship between the U.S. and countries abroad. I have worked to establish positive and productive partnerships with local development officials, nonprofit organizations, and various leaders to establish a strong web of support for countries abroad. In collaboration with the Congressional Black Caucus, I have been a continual advocate of providing assistance to various countries to strengthen their fragile democratic processes, continue to improve security, and promote economic development among other concerns such as the protection of human rights, combating narcotics, arms, and human trafficking, addressing migration, and alleviating poverty.

Once again, I am devastated by the immeasurable tragedy that occurred in Chile. Along with my colleagues, I hope to visit Chile in the near future to meet with their leaders and see what the United States can do to rebuild the shattered livelihoods.

America is responding to the earthquakes in Chile and will continue to respond with immediate humanitarian assistance to help the people of Chile rebuild their livelihoods. I send my condolences to the people and government of Chile as they grieve once again in the aftermath of a natural disaster. As Chile's friend, it is the United States' responsibility to help Chile recover, and build the capacity to mitigate against future disasters.

Financially, 2009 was not an easy year for many Americans. Although thousands of jobs were created and we are back on the road to economic recovery, Americans lived on tighter

budgets than usual. This legislation will allow those Americans who have generously donated money to Chile to receive their tax break this year instead of next year.

In January of 2005, Congress enacted this type of relief for individuals that made charitable contributions to victims of the Indian Ocean tsunami that occurred in late December of 2004. That bill (H.R. 241 in the 109th Congress) passed the House of Representatives without objection and subsequently passed the Senate by unanimous consent. Additionally, these same benefits were extended to people who donated to Haiti. I hope that this legislation, like our response to the 2004 tsunami, and January's earthquake in Haiti will encourage Americans to contribute more money to Chile. As Haiti starts on its long recovery, every dollar is critically important. Once again, I am proud to represent such a compassionate and generous nation.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4783.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1245

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 248, AFGHANISTAN WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1146 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1146

*Resolved*, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 248) directing the President, pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution, to remove the United States Armed Forces from Afghanistan, if called up by Representative Kucinich of Ohio or his designee. The concurrent resolution shall be considered as read. The concurrent resolution shall be debatable for three hours, with 90 minutes controlled by Representative Kucinich of Ohio or his designee and 90 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution to final adoption without intervening motion.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, for the 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. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I also ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 1146.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 1146 provides for the consideration of H. Con. Res. 248, directing the President, pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution, to remove the United States Armed Forces from Afghanistan. The rule provides 3 hours of general debate in the House, with 90 minutes controlled by Representative KUCINICH and 90 minutes controlled by the Committee on Foreign Affairs. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the concurrent resolution and provides that the concurrent resolution shall be considered as read.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important day, and an important debate, in the House of representatives. Last summer, I had the privilege of traveling to Afghanistan and meeting with our brave troops. They are an incredible group of people, proud of their accomplishments, thoughtful and candid about the challenges that confront them. They deserve to know that we are thinking about them and do not take their lives or their fate for granted. It has been far too long since Congress had a full and open debate on the issue of U.S. policy in Afghanistan.

In 2001, I voted, along with the vast majority of my colleagues, to go after the terrorists who attacked us on September 11th. I believe we must have a comprehensive strategy to counter the global threat posed by al Qaeda and its affiliates, no matter where they are in the world—Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen, North Africa, and elsewhere. But I also believe that we have serious challenges right here at home. Millions of Americans are out of work. Our economy is just now beginning to emerge from the worst recession in decades. Our schools, our health care, our tax code, our infrastructure—all must be updated for the 21st century if we are to create a better America.

Mr. Speaker, the war in Afghanistan has cost U.S. taxpayers well over \$200 billion—none of it paid for. None of it paid for. All of that money has been added on to our debt. And those costs will continue to rise as we fund increasing troop levels and provide the necessary care to our veterans when they return home. Our policy has drastically changed in those 8 years. We are no longer just going after the bad guys. We are engaged in a massive "nation-building" effort in Afghanistan.

Now, I certainly don't believe we should abandon the Afghan people. But instead of nation-building in Afghanistan, I'd like to do some more nation-building here at home.

Our allies in Afghanistan, the Karzai government, do not inspire confidence.