

choose to send out thinly veiled campaign mail, I would assert, under the frank, or using taxpayer dollars. If I were to hold up in an election year—now there are blackout dates, so you can't send too close to an election. But still, spending goes up considerably in Member offices during a campaign year or an election year. If I were to hold up one of my campaign pieces of mail that I pay for with my campaign and something that's sent out that has the little words on there, Paid for at taxpayer expense, they're both four color, they're both colorful, nice pieces, lauding the Member of Congress for what he or she is doing, I defy anybody to tell the difference between regular campaign mail paid by campaign funds and somebody's taxpayer mailings. We shouldn't be doing this. And it seems that we get in our offices just an increased amount that is used because nearly every office does it.

We ought to lower that amount that every office receives or in some way ban the use of these colorful four-color mailings that go out. I am certainly not asserting that Members of Congress shouldn't be able to use the frank, and a lot of the mass mailings that go out are simply to inform constituents of town hall meetings or other events that are coming up. That is proper and right. But when Members of Congress are able to send out what is basically campaign mail at taxpayer expense, that's simply not right, and it's a practice that we ought to get away from.

I should note that over the past several years, it seems to be more blatant and more blatant and more blatant. There are certain words you cannot use describing yourself. There are things that are supposedly in there to prevent this from being blatant campaign mail. But again, if I held up two pieces, one piece of campaign literature and one piece mailed at taxpayer expense, I think the average constituent would have a hard time telling the difference. And that money that we save from getting rid of that practice should be applied against the deficit as well. Again, I thank the gentlelady for introducing this legislation. I hope that in the future we can go further.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HARPER. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to Representative HELLER, the distinguished gentleman from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. I thank my friend for yielding. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4825. I commend my colleague from Arizona for bringing this legislation to the floor. Our \$12 trillion debt will burden future generations, and this legislation before us today is a good start. But I think Congress must and can do more.

You don't have to go any further than the unemployment rates in this country. As you well know, Madam Speaker, the unemployment rate na-

tionwide is around 10 percent. In my State, it's closer to 13 percent. In fact, in some counties in my district, it exceeds 17 percent. Foreclosure rates are high. Families in my district and throughout my State are losing their homes. Foreclosure rates in Nevada were four times higher than the national average. Families are making tough, tough decisions in the State of Nevada, and they're asking the question, Why aren't we making these same tough decisions here in Washington? And the reason is is that Washington feels no pain. We are in a recession-proof zone here in Washington, D.C. As we have in the last year hired more than 120,000 new Federal employees across this country, States and local governments are cutting their budgets, families are cutting their budgets, small businessmen are cutting their budgets, medium-sized businessmen are cutting their budgets. And yet here in Washington, D.C., we feel no pain. I think sending the unused congressional budget account funds to pay down the debt is one thing, but stopping the growth of this account is another.

The MRA account has grown nearly 50 percent since 2000. I introduced the reduction of irresponsible MRA, or the TRIM Growth Act, to prevent the MRA from increasing during times of high unemployment or public debt. My legislation would prevent the MRA from increasing unless national unemployment is under 6 percent or less for at least 6 months, consistent with the unemployment levels of the 1990s, or unless Congress reduces the national debt to less than \$5.5 trillion, which was a reduction of 50 percent at the time this bill was drafted.

Congress ultimately needs to feel the same pain as the American people. Financial challenges facing our Nation cannot be solved in one day. And as public servants, Members of Congress must lead by example. In addition to passing this legislation today, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the TRIM Growth Act. Let's show the Americans who are figuring out their family budgets at the kitchen table today that they are not alone.

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

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the remaining time.

I strongly support this bill, and I thank my colleagues from Arizona and Michigan for offering it. Not only is it an excellent proposal, but the timing is perfect, as the 2011 appropriations process begins. The annual bill that funds the House usually includes this language, but only if offered in the Appropriations Committee or on the floor, and even then, as legislation, the language is technically subject to a point of order that could block it. Our two colleagues rightly asked, Why should Congress have to enact this provision every year, and why not make it permanent?

So with that, I urge an "aye" vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4825.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

STATE ADMISSION DAY RECOGNITION ACT OF 2009

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3542) to direct the Architect of the Capitol to fly the flag of a State over the Capitol each year on the anniversary of the date of the State's admission to the Union, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3542

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "State Admission Day Recognition Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. FLYING STATE FLAG OVER CAPITOL ON ANNIVERSARY OF STATE'S ADMISSION TO UNION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To honor the anniversary of each State's admission to the Union, the Architect of the Capitol shall fly the flag of the State over the Capitol each year on the anniversary of the date of the State's admission to the Union.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The Architect of the Capitol shall fly the first flag of a State over the Capitol under this section on the first December 7 which occurs after the date of the enactment of this Act, in honor of the anniversary of the admission of Delaware, the first State admitted to the Union.

SEC. 3. REGULATIONS.

The Committee on House Administration of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate may promulgate jointly such regulations as may be appropriate to carry out this Act, including regulations permitting the Architect of the Capitol to honor the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the United States Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands by flying the flag of each such jurisdiction over the Capitol each year on an appropriate date for that jurisdiction.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that

all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks in the RECORD on H.R. 3542.

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

There was no objection.

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

This bill, introduced by my colleague and ranking member Mr. LUNGREN of California, would commemorate each State's admission to the Union. The bill directs the Architect of the Capitol to fly each State's flag annually on the anniversary date of the State's admission to the Union over the Capitol, beginning with the first State admitted, the State of Delaware.

During markup, the committee by voice vote adopted a perfecting amendment that I offered so that the committee may issue a regulation to provide recognition of the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the United States Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands by flying the flag of each of these jurisdictions over the Capitol annually on the appropriate date. This amended bill passed through committee by unanimous vote voice and was reported favorably.

I urge its passage.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HARPER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Today I rise in support of this bill, commemorating each of the unique States in our Union. This bill directs the Architect of the Capitol to fly the flag of a State over the Capitol each year on the anniversary of that State's admission into the Union. Madam Speaker, the United States of America truly lives up to the motto found on our Great Seal, "e pluribus unum"—out of many, one.

We are a people of many backgrounds, of many ethnicities, and of many characteristics. We are spread out over 50 unique, diverse, and special entities we call States. States allow us to organize ourselves and also give us identities that relate to our geographic and cultural tendencies. Communal bonds are formed over time through just such means. We now have 50 States in this wonderful Union. The first, Delaware, was admitted as a State on December 7, 1787. The last, Hawaii, was admitted August 21, 1959. There were 16 States admitted in the 18th century, 29 States in the 19th century, and five were admitted in the 20th century.

Each flag tells a unique story of its State's history, culture, and inhabitants, which is why my colleague, Representative LUNGREN, the author of this legislation who was unfortunately unable to be here this afternoon, thought we should honor our States in this special way, enumerated in this legislation. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman from Mississippi. I thank him for his participation on the committee, and I thank the ranking member, Mr. LUNGREN, for his participation in the committee on this bill. I urge a "yes" vote on this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3542, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

AGRICULTURAL CREDIT ACT OF 2009

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3509) to reauthorize State agricultural mediation programs under title V of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3509

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Agricultural Credit Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 506 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987 (7 U.S.C. 5106) is amended by striking "2010" and inserting "2015".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA) and the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill H.R. 3509.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 3509, the Agricultural Credit Act of 2009. This bill would reauthorize funding for the State agricultural mediation grant program, which operates under title V

of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987. The grant program for the agricultural mediation program was established more than 20 years ago to respond to the agricultural crisis of the 1980s. Mediation helped agricultural producers, their creditors, and USDA agencies address disputes through a confidential and nonadversarial process that takes place outside the traditional legal system of foreclosure, appeals or litigation. This bypasses a lot of the bureaucratic red tape that usually comes with resolving these conflicts, saving taxpayers money in the process.

Earlier in the month, the House Agriculture Committee approved this bipartisan legislation by unanimous voice vote. I urge my colleagues to support the extension of this successful initiative.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 3509, the Agricultural Credit Act of 2009. I'm an original cosponsor of this bill, and I ask my colleagues to join me in voting for this legislation to reauthorize the State agricultural mediation program. The State mediation program provides our farmers and ranchers with a voluntary and low-cost service to mediate disputes that may arise between their creditors and themselves and to address adverse decisions with the USDA. The State programs do this in a confidential and nonadversarial setting outside of the traditional legal process of foreclosure, bankruptcy, appeals, and litigation.

Like most of the country, the agricultural sector is currently experiencing increased financial stress, which has created a greater need for the services of the agricultural mediator program. The Agriculture Committee favorably considered this bill with no opposition, and I ask my colleagues to join me today in supporting the continuation of the USDA agricultural mediation program.

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

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for carrying this legislation. I think it's good bipartisan legislation. I urge my colleagues to support it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3509.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BACA. Madam 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.