

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.

ACCELERATION OF INCOME TAX BENEFITS FOR CHARITABLE CASH CONTRIBUTIONS

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4462) to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of the earthquake in Haiti, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4462

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 HAITI.

(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 January 11, 2010, and before March 1, 2010, as if such contribution was 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 Haiti on January 12, 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.

(d) PAYGO.—All applicable provisions in this section are designated as an emergency for purposes of pay-as-you-go principles.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

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

Madam Speaker, all of us have witnessed this horrendous event that has taken place on our continent; and I know that, whether Republican or Democrat, we all want to be able to do whatever we can to ease the pain of these poor people. That's why I'm glad that Mr. HERGER is here representing the Republicans on the Ways and Means Committee, which did not hesitate to meet and decide on just what we could do as a committee to make it easier to encourage people to make contributions. I know all over the country that people are collecting clothes, food, and things of that nature; but the bottom line is that they need cash; they need checks. This is what we have decided to do.

So we have a nonpartisan bill here on this which deals with the technicality.

It's available on the Web site of the Joint Committee, www.jct.gov, and it's listed under Document No. JCX-2-10.

This bill allows Americans and others to make generous cash contributions to the charities of their choice; and at the same time, it allows them not to have to wait until next year to be able to deduct these as charitable contributions. It accelerates the time that this can be done between now and March so that any contribution that is made can be deducted on the 2009 tax return, which is being prepared now for April 15.

In addition to that, there has been some question as to how you can document the actual payment if it were made on the cell phone or if it were made without actually having proof of a charitable deduction. The only proof that could be made would be by using the telephone bill, and there was a question as to whether or not that would be considered as sufficient evidence of making the contribution. This bill will, indeed, make it possible for text messages to be relied upon, text messages which are used on cell phones, when claiming these charitable contributions.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, we have all been moved by the reports and images of last week's horrendous earthquake in Haiti; and we were reminded just this morning of the dire situation that country is facing as reports have surfaced of a major aftershock.

Throughout our history, Americans have been eager to help others recover from the devastation of wars and natural disasters in faraway places. Once again, we have seen the compassion and generosity of the American people displayed front and center in the Haiti relief effort, including an outpouring of real-time donations through cell phones and the Internet. While many of our own U.S. citizens are struggling to find work and to make ends meet, it is only fitting that we should provide immediate tax relief for these charitable contributions.

This bill, which is sponsored by the bipartisan leadership of the Ways and Means Committee, as well as by the whips of both parties and by more than 150 Members from both sides of the aisle, would permit itemizers to treat Haiti-related charitable contributions made through the end of February as if they were made in 2009 rather than in 2010. This would allow itemizers the opportunity to claim the charitable deductions under 2009 returns, which most taxpayers are required to file by April 15 of this year, instead of waiting until they file their 2010 returns.

□ 1215

It would also permit taxpayers who use cell phone text messages to con-

tribute to the relief effort to use their phone bill as a record of their donation. This is a commonsense bipartisan idea, and it deserves the support of every Member. I urge an "aye" vote.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK). He is a member of the Ways and Means Committee, but, more importantly, he has been so closely identified in the bringing back of Haiti before this tragedy. He has been there, and we admire and respect the contributions he is making to rebuild this great nation.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I want to thank all of the Members that are here and the bipartisan support that we have for this great piece of legislation to not only incentivize Americans who continue to do what they have already done, to be able to help the people of Haiti, to be able to take off their contribution or get the tax benefit for giving in their 2009 taxes. I think it is important that we have a strong vote on this piece of legislation.

The Haitian people—I was just there. I spent 2 days on the ground there. Humanitarian workers are working so hard, and the majority of these non-governmental organizations that people can contribute to are doing the best work on the ground as it relates to the feeding and providing of comfort for the Haitians that are in desperate need of international support at this time. Madam Speaker, I would go even further to say hats off to our emergency response and urban rescue people that are really saving lives every day.

With the contributions that Americans give to organizations that are doing great work on the ground, coupled with the Congress and the House's action today of passing this legislation to allow some benefit to that individual for their contribution, will feed into a better response and a better recovery, not only for Haiti, but to also continue to fulfill our humanitarian commitment to the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

So I commend the chairman, the rest of the leadership that signed on to this bill, Republican Whip CANTOR, and a number of others that are on the Ways and Means Committee for this bipartisan effort. Thank you so very much.

I am pleased to be a co-sponsor on Chairman RANGEL, Majority Whip CLYBURN, Ranking Member CAMP, and Republican Whip CANTOR's bi-partisan bill that will provide an incentive for our citizens to contribute monetary donations to the relief efforts following the devastating January 12, 2010, earthquake in Haiti.

I filed an almost identical bill yesterday, H.R. 4467—with many co-sponsors.

Under this bill, if a citizen makes a cash contribution before March 1, 2010, they can take the charitable contribution deduction off of their 2009 income taxes, obviously decreasing their 2009 tax liability.

The American people have shown an outpouring of support for the Haitian people during their most vulnerable moment.

There have been countless donations from individual Americans offering whatever help they can.

Now is the time to give an added boost to the nation's charitable spirit by accelerating income tax benefits for Americans making donations.

I just returned from Haiti, witnessing first hand the horror and devastation of the earthquake.

I represent more Haitian Americans than any other Member of Congress, and my district includes Little Haiti in Miami.

With so many of my constituents in pain, I am happy to be a part of this effort to help the Haitian people and all victims of this disaster.

This bill will not only help increase contributions.

But as the bill only applies to cash contributions, the bill encourages the much needed cash to be donated.

Since the night of the earthquake, I have fielded regular calls from constituents who were stranded, and lost loved ones in Haiti.

Last Thursday night in Miami, I convened in four hours an emergency community wide meeting attended by 300 plus people to coordinate the rescue effort amongst first responders, relief experts, and the Haitian American community in Miami.

On Saturday I met with Vice President BIDEN in Miami in Little Haiti and then again at Homestead Reserve Base in Homestead Florida.

On Saturday night, I bought my own 1 way ticket from Miami to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic on American Airlines.

I landed at 12:30 a.m. (Sunday morning), secured a drive from a Dominican local and together they drove through the night to the Dominican-Haiti border and then crossed into Haiti during sun up arriving at the airport at around 7a EST on Sunday.

Never have I seen such devastation.

I witnessed the rescue of a young 2 year old that has moved me emotionally like nothing before.

Also, let's not forget that Haiti has come to America's aid before.

As an ally Haiti has been instrumental in the forming of our union.

In the Revolutionary war, Haitians fought with Americans for our independence.

Even as recently as 2005, Haiti again came to the aid of ailing Americans as the country offered support in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

I am pleased to be a part of this legislation that will help boost our help to Haiti.

What the Chairman's bill (and your bill) does:

This bill will accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of the earthquake in Haiti.

Under current law, a taxpayer is allowed to deduct charitable contributions in the taxable year the contribution is made.

The bill asks for an exception to this for cash contributions made to the Haitian relief efforts: A taxpayer who contributes a cash contribution in January or February, 2010, will be allowed to take the charitable contribution deduction in the 2009 taxable year instead of having to wait for the 2010 taxable year.

Mr. HERGER. I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend from California for the time.

I rise today as an original cosponsor of this bill.

As my colleagues have explained, this important measure would accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions to our relief efforts in Haiti. This means that those who are able to contribute now may receive the tax deduction for the 2009 filing period.

With over \$40 million in private and corporate donations already made, this will be a great incentive for the American people to reach even deeper into our pockets and help our friends in Haiti. This, in turn, will augment U.S. Government efforts, demonstrating the clear benefits of public-private partnerships. And it is an important step at a time when we must do more with less in the face of rapidly rising deficits here at home.

There is no doubt that the United States, as a government and as a people, stand side by side with the people of Haiti during this most tragic time. Our assistance efforts so far are unparalleled, and last week, President Obama pledged \$100 million in U.S. funding toward the relief efforts.

It is my hope that, after expeditious surveys of the damage, a significant portion of this funding will come from the \$845 million in international disaster assistance that this Congress has already appropriated for fiscal year 2010. By pulling from these funds, we will be able to quickly address the humanitarian needs in Haiti right now.

In addition, I urge President Obama to immediately begin efforts to convene an international donors' conference to bring together other responsible nations and international organizations that can join the United States in committing efforts to help the Haitian people recover from this horrible disaster.

Keeping in mind the urgent nature of this much-needed assistance, it remains incumbent upon the U.S. to work to ensure that international donations are pooled and integrated, that pledges are tracked, and that transparency measures are put in place to help ensure that aid reaches those who need it.

Further, we should encourage joint ventures and public-private partnerships as we consider the many ways that we may help promote not only the immediate but also the long-term recovery of Haiti as well. The United States will do its share, but the rest of the world must do its best also. Other nations must not forget about Haiti, once the attention on the crisis has subsided, and leave the U.S., as has been often the case, to bear most of the responsibility for the recovery of Haiti.

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

Mr. HERGER. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, we have all been deeply moved by the outpouring of support that we have seen from communities across the

United States. Unsurprisingly, the Haitian American community has shown invaluable leadership in the aftermath of last week's tragic earthquake. Now more than ever, the U.S. must focus our efforts on engaging these communities to make sure that they are involved in the rebuilding of their native homeland.

The Haitian diaspora is a valuable resource that must be tapped to ensure that the stability, freedom, success, and prosperity that the Haitian people deserve finally come true.

I would like to thank Chairman RANGEL and Ranking Member CAMP for introducing this important measure. I strongly urge my colleagues to support its passage.

I thank the gentleman again for the time.

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the courtesy of the Chair of the Ways and Means Committee in permitting me to speak on this and the rapid action that the committee has taken.

As we are overcome with grief and sympathy for the Haitian tragedy, I am reminded of the devastation I saw in Indonesia in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami, where over 160,000 people were killed. That disaster inspired cooperation that was truly incredible even in the troubled island of Aceh that had been torn by war for years. That rebuilding effort sparked a terrific renaissance there.

This must signal a new day for the troubled but promising country of Haiti. Obviously, our immediate priority must be saving lives with food, water, shelter, medical supplies. I am pleased that groups in my community, like the acclaimed Mercy Corps, and the Northwest Medical Team, have leaped into action with resources from the Pacific Northwest to make a difference under these dire circumstances.

But we must recognize that decades of crushing poverty in Haiti have left ordinary people far too vulnerable to disaster. We have an obligation as a country, as we work with comprehensive aid efforts in the months and years ahead after the cameras are gone, to help the Haitians rebuild that nation. You know, there are problems with the nation of Haiti. But the world has not always, indeed has seldom been a good neighbor to that troubled country.

I am pleased that this legislation will make it easier for Americans, who face tough times themselves, to help give gifts of life and hope to our neighbors in that devastated island. The bill allows those who have donated to Haiti a chance to claim the donation in the tax return that they are preparing this spring rather than waiting a full year to claim the deduction. It is a simple gesture, but it will encourage giving in this challenging economy and helping do what is right for Haiti.

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

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to yield 2 minutes to the majority whip, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN). There is no question that he has provided the leadership on this issue and inspired the Ways and Means Committee and so many other Members in the Congress. Haiti has a true friend in the heart of JIM CLYBURN, our Democratic whip.

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I thank Chairman RANGEL for yielding me this time.

I want to thank you and Mr. CAMP for bringing this legislation forward. I want to thank the minority whip, Mr. CANTOR, for joining with us in making this a truly bipartisan effort. I also want to thank the 162 cosponsors, original cosponsors, of this legislation.

I believe that all of us who are familiar with the various areas of our great country know that it all depends on where you live as to what kind of catastrophic event you can expect to visit your community. For many of us, it may be a dust storm; for others, like my area of the country, a hurricane; for others, it could very well be an earthquake.

All of us are but the sum total of our experiences, and I believe that it is this vast amount and broad level of experiences that the people of these United States of America are going to call upon in order to respond to the people of Haiti. And for us to offer all Americans the opportunity to deduct on their 2009 taxes any contribution they make to this effort by February 28 will go a long way toward incentivizing the kind of behavior that we think is very, very important.

I want to thank the sponsors of this legislation and thank all of those who will be voting for it today. It is one way that we can say to the people of this Nation that Americans not just sympathize with them but we empathize as well.

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to our whip, a member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR).

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise this afternoon in strong support of this important relief legislation for the people of Haiti.

On January 12, 2010, Haiti was shaken by an earthquake unparalleled in its history. As horrendous as they are, the pictures in our newspapers and on TV can only begin to tell the story of the suffering of the Haitian people. Just this morning, the people of that country had another scare, experiencing another shock with a magnitude of 6.1.

Madam Speaker, when crisis calls, American citizens are at their finest. The people of the U.S. have always been, and continue to be, a generous and giving people. And whether it is offering shelter to orphan children, mak-

ing cash donations, or simply volunteering time, when tragedy strikes, the American people take action.

Charitable donations have already begun pouring into organizations assisting in the relief efforts. This legislation allows generous Americans who make a cash donation to the Haitian relief effort to treat those donations as if they were made in the tax year 2009.

□ 1230

Similar policy has been used in past tragedies, and studies show that it actually increases the total amount of charitable contributions.

I want to thank my colleague, Majority Whip CLYBURN, for his assistance in bringing this legislation to the floor. I would also like to thank the gentleman from New York and the gentleman from Michigan and their leadership in bringing forward this important bill. While it is often the differences between the parties in Congress that makes the news, this legislation demonstrates that we can come together on commonsense proposals to ease the suffering of our fellow man. When our offices discussed last week how we could help encourage charitable donations for the relief effort, and in particular this proposal, it was clear that partisanship had been set aside. I think the American people and those in Haiti are all the better for it. I ask for support of this legislation.

Mr. RANGEL. I yield 2 minutes to a member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I want to, first of all, commend Chairman RANGEL and Ranking Member CAMP for their quick action and leadership on this legislation.

I rise today in strong support of this bill to accelerate the income tax benefits for those who make cash contributions to people affected by the earthquake in Haiti. Americans are deeply saddened at the level of devastation caused by the earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, resulting in tremendous damage and loss of life.

There are enormous needs in Haiti. It is important to have the Federal Government, our government, demonstrate leadership in providing relief. I also wish to acknowledge and recognize all of the organizations and groups, not-for-profits, churches. Over the weekend, I visited several churches, and I was tremendously impressed at the level of giving that people out of the goodness of their hearts were pouring out. And especially do I congratulate and commend Bishop Blake and the Church of God in Christ churches for the enormous contribution that they are making; the Baptist churches, Methodist churches. All churches. People are demonstrating what it means to give of themselves and to help others.

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, I now yield 3 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS).

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4462. On January 12, Haiti was struck by a magnitude 7 earthquake, which devastated the country and people of Haiti. I have lived for approximately a dozen years in earthquake country, and I know how serious an earthquake of this magnitude is. I wish to extend my deepest sympathy to the families who have lost loved ones in this horrible tragedy. Even in the face of this disaster, the people of the world have united in response through prayer, monetary donations, and critical humanitarian aid. In fact, The Chronicle of Philanthropy reported yesterday that over \$275 million has already been generously donated worldwide.

I am again humbled by the efforts of humanitarian aid groups based in west Michigan, which has a long history of charitable giving in times of need. The response to this natural disaster has proved no different. I'm grateful to my constituents for their compassion and generosity, which has existed for many years. Humanitarian aid groups in Grand Rapids that are contributing to the relief effort include Rays of Hope for Haiti, the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, the Red Cross, and countless others. Even a global corporation located in my district is en route with several flights this week to Haiti, transporting medical supplies and a medical team. The extraordinary efforts by all of these groups are to be commended.

While our country and the world respond to emergency needs in Haiti, I have heard from many in my community who echo my fervent requests to provide additional assistance to the orphans in Haiti. I ask for your continued prayers for the children of Haiti who will soon be united with their adoptive families here in the United States, and especially for those who have been orphaned in the wake of last Tuesday's tragedy. I also urge the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State to greatly speed up the adoption process and visa procedures for not only the orphans already in process but also for all the children who became orphans due to the death of their parents in the horrible earthquake.

I urge my constituents and all Americans to donate to a reputable charity organization for earthquake relief in Haiti. I am very pleased that former Presidents Bush and Clinton are leading efforts through the Clinton-Bush Haiti Fund. This bill, H.R. 4462, will allow taxpayers to deduct their donations from their 2009 taxes, and it is my hope that all people who are able will offer their support to the people of Haiti.

May God bless and comfort the people of Haiti.

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, in closing, I'd simply say that this is a good bill. It reflects the generosity of the American people in responding to a horrific disaster, and I urge all Members to vote "aye."

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4462, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I close this on the high note that America has shown its greatest, especially in this Congress. I want to thank SCOTT MURPHY, a new Member, for insisting that we move forward on this. Of course, the Republicans, Mr. HERGER and Mr. CAMP, who joined together with Democrats to prove that when Americans want to do things, that party labels don't really mean that much. I do hope that the rest of the country would see what we have done and take advantage of this legislation in order to make certain that they have an accurate recording of the contributions that they make through the telephone as well as to take advantage of the expediting of deductions that are being recognized by the Internal Revenue Service.

I hope everyone would vote for this bill and let this be a symbol as to what this Congress can do. It's not just for Haiti, but for ourselves and the rest of the free world.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4462, To Accelerate the Income Tax Benefits for Charitable Cash Contributions for the Relief of Victims of the Earthquake in Haiti Act, authored by my friend and colleague from New York, Representative RANGEL, the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. This important legislation would permit people who make charitable contributions to the relief work in Haiti to take a tax deduction on their 2009 taxes instead of on their 2010 returns. This is an excellent idea which will hopefully spark additional giving to help the people of Haiti.

Tens if not hundreds of thousands of people have lost their lives in the Haitian tragedy and hundreds of thousands more are homeless. The American people have been deeply moved by this crisis and are showing their profound generosity through donations to organizations helping the Haitian people. In fact, as of yesterday, the American Red Cross had already raised \$112 million for Haiti, \$22 million of which came from text messages sent by the American people. The outpouring to Haiti from the great people of this nation and from around the world has been truly overwhelming. I am touched by how Americans from all walks of life have given their time, talents, and financial resources to help those whose lives depend upon such aid.

By permitting taxpayers to take a deduction on their 2009 taxes instead of their 2010 returns, H.R. 4462 will help those Americans who have already donated and encourage those who have not yet done so. In addition to thanking Chairman RANGEL for this legislation, I would also like to mention our col-

league, Representative KENDRICK MEEK, who was developing similar legislation. He has been a leader on all aspects of U.S. policy toward Haiti and deserves to be recognized here in Congress.

Again, I strongly support H.R. 4462 to recognize the generosity of the American people in responding to the devastation in Haiti and to encourage future giving. This is a bill that inspires "the better angels of our nature" and helps the victims of this disaster, as well. It deserves our unanimous support.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of today's bill to accelerate the tax benefits for charitable contributions made in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in Haiti. The people of Haiti have endured an unimaginable disaster, and our thoughts go out to the millions of families who have been affected by this tragedy.

In times such as these, we must unite in common purpose to help those in need. I am truly heartened by the outpouring of support from the American people, who have contributed hundreds of millions of dollars to disaster relief organizations over the last week despite the economic challenges they face here at home. As policy makers, we should do all we can to encourage this charitable spirit and assist Americans in giving whatever they can through immediate tax relief. The bill will allow people to claim cash contributions made to victims of the Haiti earthquake on their 2009 tax returns, rather than waiting until they file in 2010. It offers an immediate benefit for those who have already made a contribution and provides a little extra incentive for others who are considering a donation of their own.

It is crucial that we join together to support the ongoing rescue and recovery efforts. This bill is a small but necessary component of those efforts, and I remain ready to assist the international community as they bring additional aid and relief to Haiti.

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4462 which would allow Americans to deduct the charitable contributions they make to the Haitian relief efforts in January and February of 2010 on their 2009 tax returns. I commend Chairman RANGEL for bringing this bill forward and I urge my colleagues to support it.

The toll of human suffering in Haiti is unimaginable, with up to an estimated 200,000 people who have lost their lives and nearly 3 million people affected by the earthquake. Haiti is the poorest, least developed country in the Western Hemisphere which, even before the quake, suffered from political instability, hurricanes, and food shortages. Even so, the loss of life and destruction from this disaster has left the country in a state of collapse not seen in Haiti in over two centuries.

The images of death and devastation coming from Haiti are driving Americans to donate their time, money, and supplies—it is truly America at its best. All donations, large and small, are helping to provide crucial necessities for this relief effort. Millions of dollars are pouring into non-profit organizations that are making sure that money and supplies go directly where they need to go, to the people of Haiti. The bill we pass today will help encourage even more donations.

We know that the effort to rebuild Haiti and care for those who have been injured will continue for some time to come. The people of Haiti need our help and I am pleased that we

are doing all that we can to promote the generosity Americans have shown since the devastating earthquake shook Haiti last week.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4462.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I lend my full support for H.R. 4462, introduced by my colleague Chairman CHARLES RANGEL, which allows for the acceleration of tax benefits for charitable cash contributions to benefit the victims of the earthquake in the Republic of Haiti on January 12, 2010.

This tax benefit will allow persons who make cash donations to the relief efforts in Haiti from January 11, 2010 to March 1, 2010 the opportunity to claim those donations as charitable contributions on their 2009 Federal Income Tax Return.

The 7.0 earthquake that ravaged the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince, the city of Jacmel and the city of Carrefour brought immediate devastation to the country, taking the lives of approximately 200,000 people and leaving tens of thousands missing. This event, which has left an estimated 1.5 million homeless, has completely destroyed most of the infrastructure in the capital, and was deemed the largest earthquake of this magnitude in over two centuries in the Republic of Haiti.

Providing a tax benefit on charitable contributions would offer an incentive for American citizens to give during an essential period for the relief effort in Haiti. Several charities saw a significant drop in contributions, which fund the entirety of their operations, due to the economic crisis. Non-profit organizations will need considerable resources to provide the long-term services for a population devastated by a natural disaster. This tax benefit will ensure those resources are funded by an outpouring of generosity from the American people.

In the face of this grave tragedy, the American people have given from their hearts, as well as their pockets, to assist the people of Haiti during this time of extreme hardship and turmoil. This philanthropy should not go unnoticed, especially as many people have chosen to donate at a time when their own financial well-being is uncertain.

I would like to thank Chairman RANGEL for introducing this piece of legislation, and the American people for their benevolence in this time of adversity for the Haitian people.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4462, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CELEBRATING 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF SONG TRIBUTE TO DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1010) celebrating the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the 30th anniversary of the Stevie Wonder song tribute to Dr.