

OWENS), who has been working hard on this particular bill.

□ 1200

Mr. OWENS. Madam Speaker, I want to thank Chairman CONYERS and Chairman THOMPSON for their leadership and for bringing H.R. 4748 to the floor with the Senate amendment.

Our northern border with Canada spans over 4,000 miles, the longest open border in the world. I am intimately familiar with the unique status of our shared border. My congressional district in Upstate New York includes 13 ports of entry and border crossings, and nearly 2,000 jobs depend on a stable trading relationship with our northern neighbor.

We currently lack a unified approach to stopping the flow of drugs from the northern border. As the southern border has witnessed the spread of violence that has accompanied the increased drug trade, we must be proactive and vigilant in ensuring that our northern border remains safe and open for business. Organized criminal elements are increasingly exploiting the northern border to traffic narcotics, illicit cigarettes, firearms, and people. According to the 2010 National Drug Threat Assessment, the amount of ecstasy seized at or between northern border points of entry increased 594 percent from 2004 to 2009. In 2009, there were 1,100 drug-related arrests in New York's North Country. Just last week, the Franklin County Border Narcotics Task Force caught a Malone man believed to be headed downstate with 119 pounds of marijuana. The Narcotics Task Force, consisting of law enforcement officials from the Federal, State, and local level, stand to benefit greatly from this legislation. They will have the added advantage of increased cooperation and information sharing with their counterparts across the northern border.

By enacting this important legislation into law, the Federal agency that is responsible for stopping illegal drugs from entering the U.S. will, for the first time, be mandated by Congress to create a comprehensive strategy to stop the flow of drugs across the northern border. By coordinating the efforts of Federal, State, and local officials responsible for the safety of our communities, the Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy Act will help ensure that law enforcement has the tools and information they need to keep the drug trade out of the northern border communities.

This legislation also recognizes the important balance between allowing the flow of legitimate trade and travel across the border with Canada and stopping the flow of illegal narcotics. This new strategy will reflect the unique nature of the small communities that dot the northern border and recognize the need for continued cooperation and coordination with our counterparts in Canadian law enforcement. This legislation will ultimately

make these communities safer, attracting new businesses and providing the long-term assurances of protection they need to grow and prosper.

Upstate New York has benefited for decades from a robust business relationship with our Canadian neighbors, and any illegal activity that takes place over our borders threatens that relationship. The Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy Act starts the process of developing a new approach to combating the international drug trade along our shared border with Canada. It is a vital component to the economic development and safety of our communities along that border. I ask my colleagues for their support.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, as an original cosponsor of H.R. 4748, I urge passage of this important homeland security bill so that it can be sent to the President for signature.

H.R. 4748, as amended by the Senate, would require the Director of National Drug Control Policy, ONDCP, to work with Federal, state, local, and international law enforcement to develop a comprehensive plan to prevent drug trafficking across the Northern Border. The bill requires the strategy to include clear recommendations for better coordination and assistance for tribal law enforcement agencies.

More often than not, when I hear someone lament about our "broken borders," they are talking about the Southern Border. While certainly the high-profile drug cartel violence and human smuggling activities warrant significant attention, we must not overlook the fact that there are significant border security challenges to the north, as well. In recent years, a diverse array of traffickers ranging from outlaw motorcycle gangs to Canadian drug rings have exploited the long, sparsely populated and very wooded border to traffic in large quantities of marijuana, ecstasy, and methamphetamines. Surveillance of the border is particularly challenging since smugglers have a wide range of delivery options—from helicopter and other small craft to boat and float plane to cattle trucks and even snowmobiles.

Representative OWENS, with his firsthand perspective of conditions on the Northern Border, is to be commended for authoring this bill to ensure that the Federal government has a unified approach to preventing the flow of drugs into the United States through this critical border—which spans about 4,000 miles.

The bill is not only integral to border security, but is vital for economic development in New York's North Country and other communities in the 13 states along our border with Canada. Thousands of jobs in these areas depend on the swift movement of lawful commerce across the Northern Border; illicit activity along the border risks undermining this critical trading relationship.

I congratulate Representative OWENS, a valuable member on the Homeland Security Community, for his work on Northern Border security issues and—especially—his efforts in introducing a strategic approach to stemming the flow of illicit drugs across the U.S.-Canadian border. I urge passage of H.R. 4748.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) that the House suspend the

rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 4748.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PREDISASTER HAZARD MITIGATION ACT OF 2010

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 1746) to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to reauthorize the predisaster mitigation program of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Predisaster Hazard Mitigation Act of 2010".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) *The predisaster hazard mitigation program has been successful and cost-effective. Funding from the predisaster hazard mitigation program has successfully reduced loss of life, personal injuries, damage to and destruction of property, and disruption of communities from disasters.*

(2) *The predisaster hazard mitigation program has saved Federal taxpayers from spending significant sums on disaster recovery and relief that would have been otherwise incurred had communities not successfully applied mitigation techniques.*

(3) *A 2007 Congressional Budget Office report found that the predisaster hazard mitigation program reduced losses by roughly \$3 (measured in 2007 dollars) for each dollar invested in mitigation efforts funded under the predisaster hazard mitigation program. Moreover, the Congressional Budget Office found that projects funded under the predisaster hazard mitigation program could lower the need for post-disaster assistance from the Federal Government so that the predisaster hazard mitigation investment by the Federal Government would actually save taxpayer funds.*

(4) *A 2005 report by the Multihazard Mitigation Council showed substantial benefits and cost savings from the hazard mitigation programs of the Federal Emergency Management Agency generally. Looking at a range of hazard mitigation programs of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the study found that, on average, \$1 invested by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in hazard mitigation provided the Nation with roughly \$4 in benefits. Moreover, the report projected that the mitigation grants awarded between 1993 and 2003 would save more than 220 lives and prevent nearly 4,700 injuries over approximately 50 years.*

(5) *Given the substantial savings generated from the predisaster hazard mitigation program in the years following the provision of assistance under the program, increasing funds appropriated for the program would be a wise investment.*

SEC. 3. PREDISASTER HAZARD MITIGATION.

(a) *ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—Section 203(f) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5133(f)) is amended to read as follows:*

“(f) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall award financial assistance under this section on a competitive basis and in accordance with the criteria in subsection (g).

“(2) MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM AMOUNTS.—In providing financial assistance under this section, the President shall ensure that the amount of financial assistance made available to a State (including amounts made available to local governments of the State) for a fiscal year—

“(A) is not less than the lesser of—

“(i) \$575,000; or

“(ii) the amount that is equal to 1 percent of the total funds appropriated to carry out this section for the fiscal year; and

“(B) does not exceed the amount that is equal to 15 percent of the total funds appropriated to carry out this section for the fiscal year.”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 203(m) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5133(m)) is amended to read as follows:

“(m) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

“(1) \$180,000,000 for fiscal year 2011;

“(2) \$200,000,000 for fiscal year 2012; and

“(3) \$200,000,000 for fiscal year 2013.”.

(c) TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO REFERENCES.—The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 602(a) (42 U.S.C. 5195a(a)), by striking paragraph (7) and inserting the following:

“(7) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ‘Administrator’ means the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.”; and

(2) by striking “Director” each place it appears and inserting “Administrator”, except—

(A) in section 622 (42 U.S.C. 5197a)—

(i) in the second and fourth places it appears in subsection (c); and

(ii) in subsection (d); and

(B) in section 626(b) (42 U.S.C. 5197e(b)).

SEC. 4. PROHIBITION ON EARMARKS.

Section 203 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5133) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(n) PROHIBITION ON EARMARKS.—

“(1) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term ‘congressionally directed spending’ means a statutory provision or report language included primarily at the request of a Senator or a Member, Delegate or Resident Commissioner of the House of Representatives providing, authorizing, or recommending a specific amount of discretionary budget authority, credit authority, or other spending authority for a contract, loan, loan guarantee, grant, loan authority, or other expenditure with or to an entity, or targeted to a specific State, locality, or Congressional district, other than through a statutory or administrative formula-driven or competitive award process.

“(2) PROHIBITION.—None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to carry out this section may be used for congressionally directed spending.

“(3) CERTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall submit to Congress a certification regarding whether all financial assistance under this section was awarded in accordance with this section.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials in the RECORD on the Senate amendment to H.R. 1746.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today to support H.R. 1746, as amended, a bill to reauthorize the predisaster mitigation program. This program's authorization expires with the current continuing resolution.

The predisaster mitigation program is authorized by section 203 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, or the Stafford Act, and was first authorized by this committee in the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. My subcommittee held a hearing in which we received testimony on empirical evidence that show that this predisaster mitigation program manages to get a substantial return on this investment, with some estimations as high as a 4-to-1 return to the national government.

Examples of mitigation activities highlighted at the hearing include the seismic strengthening of buildings and infrastructure, acquiring repetitively flooded homes, installing shelters and shatter-resistant windows in hurricane-prone areas, and the building of “safe rooms” in houses and other buildings to protect from high winds. The subcommittee came to the conclusion that predisaster mitigation is effective in accomplishing the goal of reducing the risk of future damage, hardship, and loss from all hazards, including loss of life.

H.R. 1746 would reauthorize the program for 3 years, make the minimum \$575,000 or 1 percent of the total funds appropriated to carry out this section for the fiscal year, and codify the competitive aspects of the program. Senate changes to the bill include an explicit ban on earmarks or any congressionally directed spending, along with reducing authorization levels of \$250 million annually to \$180 million for fiscal year 2011, and \$200 million for fiscal year 2012 and 2013.

This legislation has been endorsed by the National Association of Counties, International Association of Emergency Managers, the Association of State Floodplain Managers, the National Emergency Management Association, the National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies, and the American Public Works Association. In addition, the Federal Emergency Management Agency has requested a reauthorization of the predisaster mitigation program.

This program has consistently shown to provide an excellent return on investment, and I ask Members of the House to support the bill that protects both lives and property.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill reauthorizes the predisaster mitigation program for the next 3 years, as the gentlewoman from Washington, D.C., has just stated. I'm pleased to be a co-sponsor of this legislation, along with Chairman OBERSTAR, Ranking Member MICA, and Chairwoman NORTON, who is on the committee that I am the ranking member of.

The predisaster mitigation program was created by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 as a pilot program to study the effects and the effectiveness of mitigation for those grants given to communities before a disaster may strike. Prior to creation of the predisaster mitigation program, hazard mitigation primarily occurred after disaster through FEMA'S Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

We know that every disaster costs us a lot of money—and, obviously, more than money. In many times, even human life. It damages homes, businesses, and infrastructure. And, again, potentially loss of life.

Mitigation measures have been shown, Madam Speaker, to be very effective in mitigating the damage that occurs during a storm, and frankly, also in saving lives, which is, we would all agree, even more important. In fact, the investments that we make in mitigation actually saves taxpayer dollars. I think that deserves being repeated: It actually saves the taxpayer money.

Both the CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, and the National Institute of Building Sciences have determined that for every dollar invested in mitigation, \$3 are actually saved in actual future losses. In addition, H.R. 1746, as amended, includes a clear prohibition on earmarks.

Now, the bottom line is, mitigation works. It's been proven to work. It saves lives, it limits future damages, and reduces Federal disaster costs. In other words, it saves the taxpayer money.

□ 1210

The predisaster mitigation program is an effective program that advances these goals that I just mentioned. So I support the passage of this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I would at this time, since I don't believe there are any further speakers, just mention two things.

First, I want to once again thank Chairwoman NORTON. It has been a privilege, an honor and a pleasure to be her ranking member. She has really, really been a great champion on issues of disaster mitigation. While she represents Washington, DC, except for that big snowstorm, it is an area you would hope would have no hurricanes or earthquakes. She has been a huge champion. She has visited areas. She has gone down to south Florida and has

visited the hurricane center and has held hearings down there. So she has been a great champion.

I would just tell you, on a personal note, that she has been wonderful to work with. I didn't know we were going to be on the floor together again, Madam Speaker, but as I said the last time, I will no longer be on the T&I Committee. I will now go to the Appropriations Committee. I would be remiss if I didn't mention, though, what a privilege it has been to work with my chairwoman.

Also, one of the true gentlemen in this process and one of the people I have grown to respect and admire is the chairman of the full committee, Mr. OBERSTAR, a person who has served this country with dignity, with honor and with great integrity, and who has been exceedingly fair. I can tell you that there have been not a couple of occasions, but many occasions, that I've gone to him because I've seen things that, well, frankly, I didn't like, most of which were driven by just passions.

I would go to him and say, Mr. Chairman, this is what's going on.

Frankly, you could see it in his face. He just did not tolerate anything that he believed was not fair on his committee.

Again, he is a public servant, one who has served this country and who has shown all of us, whether we agree with him or disagree with him—and I've had multiple disagreements with him—what public service is all about. So I just wanted to make sure that I put that in the record.

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

Ms. NORTON. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida. His kind and gentle words are typical of the way he has operated on the committee—always in the most collegial fashion when he talks about the District of Columbia and its not experiencing what, for example, his own district does in Florida.

I can only say we empathize with you in Florida and all over the country. We are all Americans; and every time that we sat together in hearings, we were, of course, cognizant of the fact that we were dealing with issues that affected the entire country.

It has been a great pleasure to work with the ranking member. We worked together on each and every bill. I cannot think of a single bill on which we found a disagreement, where we had something that we wanted to change and where we didn't discuss it or staff didn't discuss it.

I know Mr. OBERSTAR would very much appreciate your remarks as well. He is a one-of-a-kind chairman who had been here as a staff member with enormous influence, and then he became a chairman with outsized influence as well.

I understand that my good friend Mr. DIAZ-BALART thinks he has found sunnier shores on another committee,

but I want him to know that I don't think he will ever have a better relationship with another Member on this side of the aisle. In the relationship that he and I have formed, it has come to be, indeed, a friendship.

So I say to him, Until we meet again, Mr. DIAZ-BALART.

I want to simply emphasize, in closing, the little bit of money for which there is a great return for 3 years. The Federal Government spent a token amount, \$500 million; but according to the CBO, the reduction in future losses associated with that small \$500 million is \$1.6 billion in present value. No wonder this bill passed in the other body.

I urge my colleagues to approve this bill as well.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Senate amendment to H.R. 1746, the "Predisaster Hazard Mitigation Act of 2010". H.R. 1746, as amended, reauthorizes the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program and helps communities across the Nation protect against natural disasters and other hazards. I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA), Ranking Member of the Committee, and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART), the Chair and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, respectively, for their bipartisan efforts on this bill.

The PDM program provides technical and financial assistance to State and local governments to reduce injuries, loss of life, and damage to property caused by natural disasters. Examples of mitigation activities include: seismic retrofitting of buildings to strengthen the buildings in case of an earthquake; acquiring repetitively flooded homes; installing shutters and shatter-resistant windows in hurricane-prone areas; and building "safe rooms" in houses and buildings to protect people from high winds.

Consideration of this bill today is crucial, as the PDM program is set to sunset with the expiration of the current continuing resolution. Therefore, Congress must take quick action to continue this vital program.

H.R. 1746, as amended, reauthorizes the PDM program for three years, at a level of \$180 million for fiscal year 2011, and \$200 million for each of fiscal years 2012 and 2013. The bill increases the minimum amount that each state receives under the program from \$500,000 to \$575,000, and codifies the competitive selection process of the program, as currently administered by FEMA.

In 1988, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure authorized FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. This effective program provides grants to communities to mitigate hazards, but only provides grants to "build better" after a disaster. At the time, no program existed to help communities mitigate risks from all hazards before disaster strikes.

In the 1990s, under the leadership of FEMA Administrator James Lee Witt, FEMA developed a PDM pilot program known as "Project Impact", which was a predecessor program to the current PDM program. Congress appropriated funds for Project Impact in each of fiscal years 1997 through 2001.

The PDM program reduces the risk of natural hazards, which is where the preponderance of risk is in our country. While it is prudent to prepare for the possibility of terrorist attacks, the occurrence of natural disasters of all types and sizes is a known certainty. The flooding that is currently occurring in California, and the tornadoes that struck in my home state of Minnesota this summer, particularly in Wadena in my district, are examples of the tragic, real impact of natural disasters that occur in our nation every year.

Mitigation saves money. Studies by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and National Institute of Building Sciences show that for every dollar invested in PDM projects, future losses are reduced by three to four dollars. In 2005, the Multihazard Mitigation Council, an advisory body of the National Institute of Building Sciences, found "that a dollar spent on mitigation saves society an average of \$4." Further, the Multihazard Mitigation Council found that flood mitigation measures yield even greater savings. According to a September 2007 CBO report on the reduction in Federal disaster assistance that is likely to result from the PDM program, "on average, future losses are reduced by about \$3 (measured in discounted present value) for each \$1 spent on those projects, including both federal and nonfederal spending."

While empirical data is critical, perhaps more telling are real-life mitigation "success stories". For instance, Seattle, Washington used Project Impact PDM grants to fortify buildings. Immediately after the Nisqually Earthquake struck Seattle on February 28, 2001, Seattle Mayor Paul Schell and other public officials cited those PDM grants as one of the primary reasons that lives and property were saved during the earthquake. Ironically, the Mayor's statements came on the same day that the President George W. Bush Administration claimed that the Project Impact PDM pilot program should be defunded because it was not effective.

Another example of the effectiveness of mitigation comes from my district. On July 4, 1999, a derecho, also known as a blow down, struck the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and downed millions of trees. This created a huge fire hazard. As a result, FEMA mitigation funds were given to residents to install outdoor sprinkler systems to protect against wild fire. Unfortunately, in 2007, the Ham Lake Fire struck the area. Those structures that had sprinkler systems were protected from the fire. Since that time, communities in that area have sought and have been awarded more than \$3 million of PDM funds to help protect other structures from this continuing risk of fire.

Mitigation is an investment. It is an investment that not only benefits the Federal Government, but State and local governments as well. Projects funded by the PDM program reduce the damage that would be paid for by the Federal Government for a major disaster under the Stafford Act. However, mitigation also reduces the risks from smaller, more frequent events that State and local governments face every day.

The PDM program takes citizens out of harm's way, by elevating a house or making sure a hospital can survive a hurricane or earthquake. In doing so, it allows first responders to focus on what is unpredictable in a disaster rather than on what is foreseeable and predictable.

H.R. 1746, as amended, eliminates the existing sunset in the program. As the evidence clearly shows, this program works well and is cost effective. It should no longer be treated as a pilot program with a sunset. Rather, State and local governments should have the certainty of knowing this program will be available in the future to enable them to focus their efforts on critical, long-term mitigation planning.

The Obama administration has specifically requested that Congress reauthorize the PDM program and this legislation has been endorsed by the National Association of Counties, International Association of Emergency Managers, the Association of State Floodplain Managers, the National Emergency Management Association, the National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies, and the American Public Works Association.

This bill passed the House more than a year and a half ago with overwhelming bipartisan support. The legislation passed the other body last night by unanimous consent. I would like to thank Senator JOSEPH LIEBERMAN and Senator SUSAN M. COLLINS for their persistent efforts to clear this legislation through the other body.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1746, as amended, the "Predisaster Hazard Mitigation Act of 2010".

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 1746.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 5116, AMERICA COMPETES REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2010; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 2751, FDA FOOD SAFETY MODERNIZATION ACT; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2142, GPRA MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2010

Mr. MCGOVERN, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 111-692) on the resolution (H. Res. 1781) providing for consideration of the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 5116) to invest in innovation through research and development, to improve the competitiveness of the United States, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 2751) to accelerate motor fuel savings nationwide and provide incentives to registered owners of high polluting automobiles to replace such automobiles with new fuel efficient and less polluting automobiles; and providing for consideration of the Senate

amendment to the bill (H.R. 2142) to require quarterly performance assessments of Government programs for purposes of assessing agency performance and improvement, and to establish agency performance improvement officers and the Performance Improvement Council, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1771 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1771

Waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules.

Resolved, That the requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported through the legislative day of December 24, 2010.

SEC. 2. It shall be in order at any time through the legislative day of December 24, 2010, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules. The Speaker or her designee shall consult with the Minority Leader or his designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to this section.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. For the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS). 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. I also ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 1771.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, House Resolution 1771 waives the requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII, requiring a two-thirds vote to consider a rule on the same day it is reported from the Rules Committee. This would allow for the same-day consideration of any resolution reported through the legislative day of December 24, 2010.

The resolution allows the Speaker to entertain motions to suspend the rules through the legislative day of December 24, 2010. The Speaker or her des-

ignee shall consult with the minority leader or his designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to section 2 of the rule.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Good morning, Madam Speaker. Welcome to this week of Christmas.

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts, my friend Mr. McGOVERN, the vice chairman of the Rules Committee, for bringing this martial law rule to the floor of the House of Representatives today.

□ 1220

Madam Speaker, the 111th Congress is in its final days, or so the body hopes. The rule before us today provides for an expedited same-day consideration of all legislation brought forward until Christmas Eve and extends suspension authority for that same period. This martial law rule consists of the ability of the Democrats to bring 4 more days of expedited consideration on top of the 11 days my colleagues gave themselves on the 8th of December.

This Congress has seen a record number of restrictive rules over the past 2 years. In fact, we have not debated one open rule in this Congress. I don't believe that closing debate, limiting amendments, and shutting down Democrats and Republicans out of their thoughtful solutions on the House floor is what we were promised by Speaker PELOSI. Speaker PELOSI openly told the American people that she would run the most open, honest, and ethical Congress. Madam Speaker, I would say to you that as we started, so are we ending, in chaos.

It seems like every time I come to the House floor I point out that my Democrat colleagues are using an unprecedented, restrictive, and closed process. This is not what the American people wanted, and I believe the American people truly do want their Member of Congress to be able to come to Washington, DC, to fully participate in the process. And unfortunately, we find ourselves here again today with Members simply sitting back in their offices, wondering and waiting what is next, what are we even debating, what are we doing, rather than being actively involved in this democratic process. Madam Speaker, that's why people came to Congress.

This Congress has managed to rack up a record \$1.4 trillion deficit in 2009, more than three times the size of the deficit in 2008, and it hit a \$1.3 trillion deficit this year. Additionally, we have seen unemployment at or above 9.5 percent across this country for over 18 consecutive months and a national debt that has now ballooned to \$13.4 trillion, and yet we see no end to the spending, which is evident by the rule that we are here discussing today. No discipline; no feedback from Members,