

Price (GA)
 Quayle
 Reed
 Renacci
 Ribble
 Rigell
 Roby
 Roe (TN)
 Rogers (AL)
 Rogers (KY)
 Rogers (MI)
 Rohrabacher
 Rokita
 Rooney
 Ross (FL)

Royce
 Scalise
 Schweikert
 Scott (SC)
 Scott, Austin
 Sensenbrenner
 Sessions
 Simpson
 Smith (NE)
 Smith (TX)
 Southerland
 Stearns
 Stutzman
 Sullivan
 Thompson (PA)

Thornberry
 Tipton
 Walberg
 Webster
 Westmoreland
 Whitfield
 Wilson (SC)
 Wittman
 Wolf
 Womack
 Woodall
 Yoder
 Young (FL)
 Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—15

Bass (CA)
 Chaffetz
 Courtney
 Frelinghuysen
 Giffords
 Honda
 Lofgren, Zoe
 Manzullo
 Moore
 Myrick
 Neal
 Pingree (ME)
 Rush
 Schwartz
 West

□ 1350

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. WEST. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 395, had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Stated for:

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 395, I intended to vote "yea." After the time to change my vote had expired I noticed my vote had been recorded as "nay."

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GINGREY of Georgia) having assumed the chair, Mr. THORNBERRY, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2017) making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2055, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

Mr. WEBSTER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 288 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 288

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2055) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the chair of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read. When the committee rises and reports the bill back to the House with a recommendation that the bill do pass, the previous question shall

be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) proceedings under section 2 of this resolution; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. The proceedings referred to in the first section of this resolution are as follows: (a) after disposition of any amendments reported from the Committee of the Whole, the Chair shall put the question on retaining the title beginning on page 25, line 14 (Department of Veterans Affairs); and (b) after disposition of the question under subsection (a), the Chair shall put the question on engrossment and third reading of the text comprising those portions of the bill (as perfected) (1) retained by the House pursuant to subsection (a) and (2) not subject to proceedings under subsection (a).

SEC. 3. In the engrossment of H.R. 2055, the Clerk shall conform title and section numbers and make related corrections to cross-references in the event a portion of the bill is not retained pursuant to section 2 of this resolution.

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

Mr. WEBSTER. For the purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WEBSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WEBSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this rule and the underlying bill. House Resolution 288 provides for an open rule for consideration of H.R. 2055, the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for 2012. This rule provides for ample debate and opportunities for the Members of the minority and majority party to participate in that debate. The rule places no limitation on the number of amendments that may be considered as long as they comply with the House rules.

Similar to the open rule that was passed yesterday on the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill, the only differences are in section 2 of this rule: it does allow for a separate vote on a title addressing the Department of Veterans Affairs. In doing so, we are delivering on the Speaker's promise to reduce the so-called omnibus bill and give Members the opportunity to have an up-or-down vote on Cabinet-level Departments contained in the bill.

Part of the Speaker's and Rules Committee chairman's commitment is to have a more open and transparent process. In the end, that is what this does. This is an open rule that allows for debate and for amendments.

NOES—234

Ackerman
 Alexander
 Altmire
 Andrews
 Baca
 Baldwin
 Barletta
 Barrow
 Becerra
 Berkley
 Berman
 Biggert
 Bishop (GA)
 Bishop (NY)
 Blumenauer
 Boren
 Boswell
 Brady (PA)
 Braley (IA)
 Brown (FL)
 Butterfield
 Capito
 Capps
 Capuano
 Cardoza
 Carnahan
 Carney
 Carson (IN)
 Castor (FL)
 Chandler
 Chu
 Cicilline
 Clarke (MI)
 Clarke (NY)
 Clay
 Cleaver
 Clyburn
 Cohen
 Connolly (VA)
 Conyers
 Cooper
 Costa
 Costello
 Cravaack
 Critz
 Crowley
 Cuellar
 Cummings
 Davis (CA)
 Davis (IL)
 DeFazio
 DeGette
 DeLauro
 Deutch
 Diaz-Balart
 Dicks
 Dingell
 Doggett
 Dold
 Donnelly (IN)
 Doyle
 Edwards
 Ellison
 Emerson
 Engel
 Eshoo
 Farenthold
 Farr
 Fattah
 Filner
 Fitzpatrick
 Frank (MA)
 Fudge
 Garamendi
 Gerlach
 Gibson
 Gonzalez
 Graves (MO)
 Green, Al

Green, Gene
 Grijalva
 Grimm
 Gutierrez
 Hanabusa
 Hanna
 Hastings (FL)
 Heck
 Heinrich
 Higgins
 Himes
 Hinchey
 Hinojosa
 Hirono
 Hochul
 Holden
 Holt
 Hoyer
 Hultgren
 Inslee
 Israel
 Jackson (IL)
 Jackson Lee
 (TX)
 Johnson (GA)
 Johnson (IL)
 Johnson, E. B.
 Johnson, Loretta
 Kaptur
 Keating
 Kelly
 Kildee
 Kind
 King (NY)
 Kinzinger (IL)
 Kissell
 Kucinich
 Lance
 Langevin
 Larsen (WA)
 Larson (CT)
 LaTourette
 Lee (CA)
 Levin
 Lewis (GA)
 Lipinski
 LoBiondo
 Loebach
 Lowey
 Lujan
 Lynch
 Maloney
 Marino
 Markey
 Matheson
 Matsui
 McCarthy (NY)
 McCollum
 McCotter
 McDermott
 McGovern
 McKinley
 McNeerney
 Meehan
 Meeks
 Michaud
 Miller (MI)
 Miller (NC)
 Miller, George
 Moran
 Murphy (CT)
 Murphy (PA)
 Nadler
 Napolitano
 Oliver
 Owens
 Pallone
 Pascrell
 Pastor (AZ)
 Payne

Pelosi
 Perlmutter
 Peters
 Peterson
 Petri
 Polis
 Price (NC)
 Quigley
 Rahall
 Rangel
 Rehberg
 Reichert
 Reyes
 Richardson
 Richmond
 Rivera
 Ros-Lehtinen
 Roskam
 Ross (AR)
 Rothman (NJ)
 Roybal-Allard
 Runyan
 Ruppersberger
 Ryan (OH)
 Ryan (WI)
 Sanchez, Linda
 T.
 Sanchez, Loretta
 Sarbanes
 Schakowsky
 Schiff
 Schilling
 Schmidt
 Schock
 Schrader
 Scott (VA)
 Scott, David
 Serrano
 Sewell
 Sherman
 Shimkus
 Shuler
 Shuster
 Sires
 Slaughter
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (WA)
 Speier
 Stark
 Stivers
 Sutton
 Terry
 Thompson (CA)
 Thompson (MS)
 Tiberi
 Tierney
 Tonko
 Towns
 Tsongas
 Turner
 Upton
 Van Hollen
 Velázquez
 Visclosky
 Walden
 Walsh (IL)
 Walz (MN)
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 Waters
 Watt
 Waxman
 Weiner
 Welch
 Wilson (FL)
 Woolsey
 Wu
 Yarmuth
 Young (AK)

I think every Member of the Congress was elected by a group of people in their district, citizens in their district, and they assumed that that Member would be able to come and debate and offer amendments to bills at will. Sometimes that is not the case, but it is the case this particular time. Every one of us who comes here, Republican or Democrat, liberal, moderate or conservative, comes with a desire of affecting public policy in a real way. The only way that can happen is when the process is more open and more honest and more transparent, and that is what this rule does for this particular bill. It has been a long time, yesterday being one of the first times, but a long time since we have considered an appropriation bill with an open rule.

This bill has truly been, I would say, a bipartisan effort. It is one of the first times, and I am very delighted to present the underlying bill through this rule because it is such a bipartisan effort. Even the rule itself was adopted by unanimous consent by the Rules Committee, which is something I have not experienced in my first 5 months here. So that, too, is something very, very different.

I think that is the way the process should work. I think we have got to work together. We have problems in this country, and they are deep problems. If we don't work together, we will never solve them. I think this may be a start of something that might be a little different than the way it has been.

The Democrats on the Appropriations Committee said these things about this bill: the bill sufficiently funds critical military construction, family housing and quality-of-life improvements for our brave men and women in uniform and their families. The bill meets the needs of our military veteran communities for the coming year.

That really states the purpose of this bill, and so to me, it has met the needs not only in the eyes of Democrats but also Republicans.

□ 1400

Further, the care for our veterans and service men and women is not a partisan issue. It's not. It's proven out in this particular rule and this bill.

I would like to stress that there are many programs funded at previous levels or above previous levels that have kept the promise made to our men and women in uniform. It increases the Veterans Affairs budget for things like veterans' benefits and health programs by \$8.7 billion to \$127.7 billion. It includes the full funding for VA compensation and benefits: education benefits, vocational rehabilitation, and housing programs. It contains \$52 billion in advance funding for the VA. The same level passed in the House budget resolution for medical services, medical support, and compliance and medical facilities. This advance funding will ensure that our veterans have full

access to their medical care needs regardless of where we stand in our annual appropriations process.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this rule and the underlying legislation. The Appropriations Committee has worked to provide us with a fiscally responsible appropriations bill that promises to meet the needs of our military construction and our promises to the American veterans. I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule and "yes" on the underlying bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank my good friend from Florida (Mr. WEBSTER) for yielding the customary time.

Mr. Speaker, as he has said, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2012 provides \$144 billion in appropriations for veterans' programs, military construction projects, and other agencies and programs.

This bipartisan effort—and Mr. WEBSTER underscored that, and I echo his sentiments in that regard—brought Democrats and Republicans together to craft legislation that provides the necessary funds for important military construction projects as well as improves the quality of life for veterans and military families.

One of our colleagues who no longer serves here would be very proud of this measure. He and Mr. DICKS and others worked together for years. I know Ike Skelton spent the greater portion of his career working to improve the quality of life for veterans and military families, so I pay homage to him that I have the privilege of presenting this measure on the floor.

This measure increases overall funding for veterans' health and benefits programs, ensuring that servicemen and -women who have dedicated themselves to our country will continue to receive the benefits they deserve.

This legislation provides \$14 billion in military construction for a wide range of new, upgraded and improved housing projects for members of the military and their families. This funding also includes important upgrades for military medical facilities and Defense Department education facilities located both here at home and on bases around the world.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is provided a total of \$128 billion in budget authority, an increase of almost \$9 billion over last year. This legislation ensures full funding for essential VA compensation and benefits programs in areas like education, vocational training and housing assistance. It also includes \$52 billion in advance funding for the VA, ensuring that veterans will continue to have full access to their medical care needs regardless of where Congress stands in the annual appropriations process. This underlying legislation includes funding for important national programs and activities, such as Arlington National

Cemetery, the American Battle Monuments Commission, the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, and the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

However, Mr. Speaker, I am a little disappointed to see that the majority included, unfortunately, a political and possibly divisive amendment regarding project labor agreements.

In February 2009, President Obama issued an executive order to allow Federal agencies to consider requiring the use of project labor agreements in connection with large-scale construction projects. This executive order did not mandate the use of these agreements. In fact, the order explicitly states that Federal officials have the option to determine if these agreements are right for a project.

Unfortunately, the committee adopted an amendment to the underlying legislation that prohibits funds from being used to implement this order, effectively blocking agencies from even considering such labor agreements. These labor agreements are useful to promote the economy and efficiency in Federal procurement practices. A project labor agreement is a pre-hire agreement that establishes the terms and conditions of employment for a specific construction project, and it can be a useful tool to ensure coordination on large-scale projects involving multiple employers.

The executive order still allows for competition in contracts and subcontracts, contains guarantees against strikes and similar job disruptions and provides mechanisms for management and labor cooperation; but while the executive order does not mandate the use of project labor agreements, the language adopted by the committee rules out that possibility altogether. The executive order ensures that construction projects are built correctly the first time, on time and, as a result, on budget.

Frankly, this is an inappropriate and unnecessary politicization of this appropriations bill, and I believe, in the end, it will simply add cost to the taxpayer through a less efficient procurement process.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that I am also troubled by the provision regarding Guantanamo Bay detainees. This legislation—indeed, all of the appropriations bills—are going to include provisions to prohibit funds to renovate, expand or construct facilities in the United States in order to house Guantanamo Bay detainees. Let me say the same thing I said during last year's appropriations cycle when similar language was included:

The language in this bill is not going to solve the problem of what to do with the indefinite detention of individuals at Guantanamo Bay. The debate over Guantanamo is missing the larger picture, and that is the need to reform our entire detention policy.

As I have maintained, the problem is the policy, not the place. Without a

system of justice to deal with suspected terrorists wherever they are held, we are left with a broken system that has been a significant recruiting tool for al Qaeda and other groups which threaten our security. We need to deny them that image of America. We need a judicial process that accomplishes three things: one, protects our national security by holding and prosecuting those who have committed crimes or who pose a threat to our country; two, upholds international standards of human rights; and three, strengthens our Nation's image as a country that upholds the rule of law and does not resort to arbitrary justice even while under threat.

The underlying legislation is the second appropriations bill this cycle to contain provisions relating to Guantanamo. I expect that the remaining bills will also include this language. At some point soon, we are going to need to move beyond trying to legislate this matter into appropriations bills and, instead, deal with establishing new and appropriate policies and guidelines to bring our national security needs in line with our historic national values.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying legislation contains essential funding for critical military construction programs and for our Nation's veterans. It is fitting that we consider this legislation so soon after Memorial Day when the sacrifices made by so many servicemen and -women are still on our minds. Veterans deserve our thanks and our admiration, and we owe them the necessary resources to meet their health care, education and housing needs.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1410

Mr. WEBSTER. I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. NUGENT).

Mr. NUGENT. I thank my friend, my fellow Floridian and Rules member, Mr. WEBSTER, for the opportunity to speak in support of this rule and also in support of the underlying legislation, H.R. 2055, which appropriates funds for military construction and for our Nation's veterans.

Mr. Speaker, Florida's Fifth Congressional District, which I represent, is home to over 116,000 veterans, one of the highest veteran populations of any district in America. The funds we're talking about here today have a direct effect on the lives of the men and women who have proudly served our Nation in uniform. This bill provides full funding for VA and health and educational benefits. It also funds vocational rehabilitation training for those troops who come home from war with service-connected disabilities.

Thanks to programs like VetSuccess, these veterans can work with job counselors to develop the skills necessary to find meaningful civilian employment. These programs also help connect veterans who are unable to work and give them additional training to allow them to be independent living in America.

Given the number of veterans living in my district, I'm lucky enough to have visited a large number of VA health and benefits facilities throughout my district. During these trips, I have had the opportunity to see and visit with a number of physicians, nurses, and staff which these funds help keep on the mission of protecting and taking care of our veterans on a daily basis. I've also had the opportunity to speak with the true American heroes, those who answered the call of duty and put their lives on the line to protect our country, our way of life, and our freedoms.

Mr. Speaker, we as a Nation owe our veterans a debt that can never be repaid. However, as Members of Congress, we can ensure that we keep our promises to our troops. H.R. 2055 fully funds the benefits that give our veterans back a small measure of what they truly deserve.

As a member of the Rules Committee, I am proud of this rule. We are continuing to make the 112th Congress the most open, transparent Congress the American people have seen in years. In fact, this may be the first rule that I've seen that was a voice vote unanimously approving the rule. I would like to thank the Appropriations Committee for their hard work on this underlying legislation that this rule will bring to the House floor.

I spoke about visiting hospitals within my district. At Haley Hospital, the VA hospital in Tampa, I've had the opportunity to meet a number of those who have had serious traumatic brain injuries, amputees, those that have the ability to try to get their lives back on track after giving so much to this Nation.

I had them point to the stars on my chest here that indicate that I have three sons serving, and they were more concerned about me as a dad than their own physical infirmities that they're fighting to try to overcome. As the father of three sons who are currently serving in the United States Army, we've been blessed as a family and as a Nation, and as my oldest son came back from 15 months in Afghanistan in combat, but for the grace of God he came back whole, not like so many others who have served this country and given so much.

H.R. 2055 is a good bill, and this rule is a good rule. I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support them both.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that during the Rules Committee hearing, Mr. SANFORD BISHOP, the ranking member of the subcommittee, raised a concern about the consequence of requiring separate votes on various parts of the bill. We feel that this is a serious issue, and we intend to continue to monitor the process closely as we consider the remaining appropriations bills.

I am very pleased at this time to yield 3 minutes to my good friend, the

distinguished gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS), the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in reluctant opposition to this rule and need to take a moment to explain why, because I know many Members, especially Members of the minority, appreciate the openness of the amendment process. My concerns lie elsewhere with this rule; namely, that this rule for the first time requires a separate vote in the House on title II instead of following the regular order process.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this procedural change sets a very bad precedent for the Appropriations Committee and for the House as a whole. Our committee currently has 12 subcommittees which cover every agency and program we fund through discretionary appropriations. Over the years that I have served on this committee, those jurisdictions have been changed—broadened, narrowed, switched places. And we have even created new subcommittees to address a current need, such as the Homeland Security subcommittee following the terrible events of 9/11.

There have also been realignments based on political dynamics, such as the abolition of the old VA-HUD subcommittee which had forced veterans, housing, and NASA programs to all compete within the same bill and same allocation for annual funding. We now fund Veterans Affairs with Military Construction.

If the majority is unhappy with the current subcommittee makeup, or believes an agency should stand alone for individual approval, they have every tool available to them to change the jurisdictions. We need not change the way we consider these bills on the floor and complicate a fairly straightforward process Members are already familiar with.

As ranking member of this committee, I must also focus on the impact this change would have on our entire process, especially our process of reconciling these bills with the other body. The theoretical defeat of a title compromises the position of the House in conference committee negotiations. Now I don't think that will happen on the MilCon-VA bill.

However, in some instances, the House may reject a title. In that circumstance, how does the House proceed to conference with the Senate on that particular bill? We cannot just decline to fund an entire title and then go on to negotiate its terms with the Senate. Striking a title of an appropriations bill will limit the House's ability to negotiate anything in that title by limiting the scope of that conference to only measures approved by both Chambers.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the open amendment process this rule provides but do wish that we would stick to true regular order for consideration of this bill.

I want to just also add that this is a good bill. It could be a little better, but

I think this is a bill that should be passed overwhelmingly.

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

□ 1420

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, so soon after commemorating Memorial Day and honoring our Nation's veterans, we all can be pleased by the level of bipartisan support provided in this legislation for essential veterans programs. We all know that they deserve the very best support our Nation has to offer, and I am pleased to note that Democrats and Republicans came together to craft legislation that provides the necessary resources for veterans and their families.

As I pointed out, I wish that the language relating to project labor agreements was not in this bill. I believe that President Obama's executive order gives, rightly, Federal officials flexibility in determining the most cost-efficient method of completing large-scale construction projects. The executive order simply provides options, and the language in the bill by the majority closes those options off. This is going to be, in my view, inefficient and costly and shouldn't be included in the underlying legislation.

So, too, must this Congress deal reasonably with the issues that I spoke of regarding Guantanamo Bay. Congress has a responsibility to ensure that the United States upholds the rule of law, remains true to the great foundational ideals of our democracy, and has flexibility in its counterterrorism policies to ensure an effective national security strategy.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBSTER. Mr. Speaker, as you heard me say earlier, my Republican colleagues and I are committed to providing a more open, transparent and accountable process here. Today's bill is a monumental step towards that right direction, and it's an example of a big desire within our own Speaker's heart to change the way things work here in Washington.

The underlying bill has bipartisan support. It went through the regular order; it provided an open rule to allow Republicans and Democrats alike to bring up their ideas and debate them; and even some that have been brought up by the minority here, those are brought up in a way that we will have an opportunity to amend at a later date.

Mr. DICKS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WEBSTER. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

Can the gentleman explain why all of a sudden the new majority has decided to have a separate vote on one Department and risk the possibility of going

to conference, say, with Military Construction but not with the Veterans Affairs? What is the purpose for this, especially with an open rule when you can vote on any provision in the bill?

Mr. WEBSTER. In doing so, we are delivering on the Speaker's promise to reduce so-called "omnibus" bills to a smaller, more understandable bill that gives Members the opportunity to have an up-or-down vote on Cabinet-level Departments contained in the bill.

I will tell you that I experienced the same thing. I used to be a leader of a group in Florida which was known as the House of Representatives. And as Speaker there, we did the same thing. It was the first time ever, and I always knew, a lot of people with questions, can you divide up the different appropriations and send them to a Senate who may have a smaller—yes, you can. And basically all we did was break up the conferences. The conferences stayed exactly the same. The Members were appointed, and two bills, let's say, instead of one were sent to a particular conference while the Senate added their one. And then they were combined at a later date and passed as a general appropriation act.

So it can work, I promise you. I know it's new; I know it's different. You probably would question that there is something behind it—

Mr. DICKS. Do you think it's a good idea?

Mr. WEBSTER. I do believe it's a good idea. And the reason I believe it's a good idea is because I think there was some angst about looking at a large package at one time, and this is just an opportunity to break it up. I don't think it changes anything. I think it gives us an opportunity to actually scrutinize in a better way.

Mr. DICKS. Well, you could have another subcommittee. You could have a subcommittee do Veterans Administration and one do Military Construction. Anybody thought about that?

Mr. WEBSTER. I don't know.

Mr. DICKS. I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

Mr. WEBSTER. Reclaiming my time, I will start where I left off.

The vote on the rule, which provides an open and transparent process, which makes no limitations on amendments, where ideas and policies will rise and fall on their merits and their bases and debate and so forth, is an awesome opportunity for this House to speak its will, not just an up-or-down vote on one bill, but an up-or-down vote on amendment after amendment in order to perfect the bill.

The clash of ideas is a good thing. And as we debate these ideas and we hear them on the floor of the House and then we have an opportunity to vote on them, it makes a good bill a better bill. This is what the American people expect from their elected officials. It is an expectation that is fulfilled by the rule and produced in the underlying bill. I encourage all my colleagues to join me in supporting passage of this bill.

For over two centuries, our U.S. military has protected America from both our enemies and the enemies of our friends. The valor and dignity and courage of our men and women in uniform remain strong. From Valley Forge to Desert Storm, from San Juan Hill to Operation Enduring Freedom, the fighting spirit of American soldiers shines throughout history.

It is due to the lives selflessly lived and lost in defense of our country that we have the privilege to stand here today free and grateful. So thank you, veterans. And I, too, am glad that this happened just a few days after Memorial Day because it is a great way to remember the people that have given their lives for our country.

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

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOHMERT). Pursuant to House Resolution 287 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2017.

□ 1426

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2017) making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, with Mr. GINGREY of Georgia (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) had been disposed of and the bill had been read through page 92, line 7.

AMENDMENT NO. 42 OFFERED BY MR. COLE

Mr. COLE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____ None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to implement any rule, regulation, or executive order regarding the disclosure of political contributions that takes effect on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Oklahoma is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Chairman, in April, a draft executive order was circulated