

rollcall 407—Speier Amendment; “yes” on rollcall 408—the DeLauro/Markey/Frank Amendment; “yes” on rollcall 409—the Motion to Re-commit on H.R. 4480; “no” on rollcall 410—Final Passage of H.R. 4480; and “no” on rollcall 411—Motion to Instruct Conferees on H.R. 4348.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5973, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2013; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5972, TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2013

Ms. FOXX, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112-545) on the resolution (H. Res. 697) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5973) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5972) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), the majority leader, to inquire of the majority leader the schedule for the week to come.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman from Maryland, the Democratic whip, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the House will meet in pro forma session, but no votes are expected.

On Tuesday, the House will meet at noon for morning-hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30 p.m.

On Wednesday and Thursday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning-hour and noon for legislative business.

On Friday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business. Last votes of the week are expected no later than 3 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the House will consider a number of bills under suspension of the rules, a complete list of which will be announced by the close of business tomorrow.

In addition, the House may consider two appropriations bills next week, H.R. 5972, the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Act, and H.R. 5973, the Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food and Drug Administration Act.

Members are advised that the House will begin consideration of one of these two bills after the 6:30 p.m. vote series on Tuesday and should expect an additional late evening series of votes on amendments. Again, Mr. Speaker, that is on Tuesday.

The House is also scheduled to consider a privileged resolution finding Eric H. Holder, Jr., Attorney General of the U.S. Department of Justice, in contempt of Congress for refusal to comply with a subpoena issued by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Finally, I expect the House to consider legislation dealing with both the expiring authority of our Nation's highway programs, as well as the pending increase in the Federal subsidized student loan rate.

Before I yield back, Mr. Speaker, I want to assure Members that we will accommodate both the congressional White House picnic on Wednesday night, as well as the congressional baseball game on Thursday evening. Debate may continue on appropriations amendments after the picnic and during the baseball game, but during those events no votes will take place.

I thank the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Obviously, the gentleman has spoken to a number of very important pieces of legislation, and I want to talk about those. Then I want to talk about what I believe to be a diversion from the important business of this country. But I will get to, first, the highway conference.

On Friday, it will be 100 days since the Senate has passed a bipartisan bill, a bill which had 75 Members of the United States Senate for it. That conference has not yet reported out. I understand there is some activity on that.

The House overwhelmingly voted for the Walz MTI, and it said the conferees ought to report out a conference report by tomorrow. I don't know whether that's about to happen—today is tomorrow—but we will see whether or not it proceeds. Perhaps the gentleman can give us some information on that issue.

I've offered a motion, as the gentleman knows, to instruct to give the House an up-or-down vote on the Senate bill if we can't wait for a bill that comes out of conference. Clearly, if it doesn't come out of conference, it's going to cost us a lot of jobs. It will not protect the 1.9 million jobs the Senate bill protects, and it will not create approximately 1 million additional jobs.

As the gentleman knows, it is our view that we've been considering a lot of legislation which does not create jobs, does not impact positively the growth in our economy; but I think there is little dispute that the highway bill will in fact do that.

In addition, there has been a lot of talk about certainty. I agree with the premise that we ought to give certainty to the economy and to employ-

ers and employees, and to States and subdivisions and private sector contractors. Obviously, if we don't extend the highway bill, that will not be the case. In fact, it will be a very uncertain world in which they will be operating.

So can my friend tell me what the status of the conference is, if he knows? I will tell you, very frankly, that the Democratic conferees do not know the status of the conference.

And I will yield to my friend.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman.

I would say to the gentleman the conferees continue to work in a bicameral nature. The discussions are proceeding between Chairman MICA and Chairman BOXER. And as the gentleman knows, I have said before, we are desirous of seeing a bill done, as the gentleman said, to afford more certainty to the folks who are relying on the funding of our Nation's transportation program. We certainly think it would be a huge benefit to producing a bill prior to the expiration of the program next week, but knowing full well most of us do not want to see any kind of shutdown in the funding, that we would be prepared in any way to make sure that does not happen.

□ 1320

But the intention is to allow these conferees to continue to do their work and, hopefully, we'll have a bill to vote on next week.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information. I hope the gentleman's correct.

My concern, and the concern on this side, continues to be the position—as Mr. SHUSTER, who is the one of the ranking members and whose dad, of course, chaired the Transportation Committee at one point in time. There was a story that SHUSTER acknowledged that the House GOP's leadership's inability to pass its 5-year, \$260 billion transportation bill “weakens our hand in conference.” And this is what concerned me, Mr. Leader.

But he added, “It's not an option to give away the House position.”

Now, he was referring to, of course, a bill which has not passed this House, has not even been brought to the floor of this House. And that article went on to say, House Republicans say they are willing to walk away from the highway bill talks if they cannot get what they want.

Now, this was an interview—I see Mr. SHUSTER on the floor, and Mr. SHUSTER's a friend of mine. I'll be glad to hear what he has to say on that matter, and I'll yield to him.

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank the gentleman for yielding. And what I was referring to is we did send over a position on our extension, and that was the streamlining that we wanted in our original bill but was in the extension. So that's what I was talking about. That's the House position. And as far as I can tell, things are moving in a positive direction. But I guess we'll be debating your motion to instruct a little later.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information. I certainly hope that we are moving in a positive direction because we've been a long time getting to resolution of this matter.

Next I would like to ask—you indicated that student loans may be on the calendar as well. Can the gentleman tell me what his expectation is on that, if he knows?

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I'd say to the gentleman, it has been our position all along that we do not want to see the expiration of the funding of the program to impact the students that right now are struggling, and we have presented to both the White House, as well as the gentleman's side of the aisle here in the Capitol, various ways of accomplishing that end in a responsible manner, in a fiscally responsible manner so that we're not digging the hole any deeper, we're not incurring any additional debt in order to do that, and thus far, have not seen a willingness on the part of the White House.

I am aware that there are discussions ongoing on the other side of the Capitol to see if there can be some resolution on this issue. And that's all I can say to the gentleman as far as I know.

Mr. HOYER. Well, I'm hopeful that we can resolve this in a way that is agreeable to at least the majority of both Houses and to the President of the United States because if we don't, as the gentleman knows, we're going to increase interest rates by doubling them from 3.4 to 6.8 percent.

Today's college students are leaving with an average of \$26,000 in debt. This would add another \$1,000 of debt to those students, and right now, with students owing more than \$1 trillion, placing more debt on their head. And I would urge us, therefore, to come to an agreement, come to an agreement that both sides could vote for.

Obviously, as the gentleman knows, the House bill that passed was a pay-for that Democrats didn't vote for here, and I think it was well known that the Senate would not agree to that, so I'm hopeful that we do reach an agreement that will provide for its passage.

Now, let me ask the gentleman—we, of course, made the representation that we ought to be focused on jobs. We believe that's critically important, and we believe that ought to be the focus of this Congress. It's the focus of the American people.

We went through, in years past, distractions. You say, with just some 30 full days left between now and the election, that you're going to bring up a resolution that came out of committee, as I understand, yesterday, without much time for consideration or deliberation, a very, very serious matter.

Attorney General Holder, of course, has been involved in making sure that votes are not suppressed all over this country. He has, in my view, conducted himself in a way that brought credit to the Justice Department, to himself, and to this administration.

I don't know—well, let me ask the gentleman. How long do you expect to spend on this motion?

I don't think any of us have seen the final bill that's going to come to the floor or the resolution that's going to come to the floor suggesting that Mr. Holder be held in contempt. I don't think anybody outside of the committees has had an opportunity to consider this very weighty, important matter, very disruptive matter, if I would say, and distracting matter.

What procedure does the gentleman suggest is going to be pursued next week on this matter?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I'd respond to the gentleman, and I think the gentleman does know this is a privileged resolution of which he speaks, and it would be subject to the 1-hour rule, just as privileged resolutions were under their majority, Mr. Speaker, and we will expect to proceed accordingly.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information. Which means that a matter of great weight is going to be brought to the floor within just a few days of being passed out of committee, with a relatively short period of time for either debate or for consideration.

There is, of course, precedent, and the gentleman's correct. It is a privileged resolution, and I understand the rules under privileged resolutions. But I do understand that this is a matter that's going to require a very careful, judicious, if I can say, consideration. And to bring it up at a time when we ought to be focused on jobs, when you're trying to do two appropriations bills, when you're talking about the highway bill and we're talking about the student loan bill, and to treat it as somewhat of a suspension bill provision, with little time to really have it discussed with the seriousness that the subject matter requires, I would suggest to the gentleman that this is going to be not only a distraction, but an unfortunate taking our focus off of creating jobs here in America.

I yield to my friend if he wants to make a comment.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I'd say to the gentleman, this is an issue of making sure that the American people are given an opportunity to have all the information surrounding the issues involved with the Fast and Furious program.

This is an issue that we feel, as has been indicated by the actions of Chairman ISSA, that in acting with all reason, asking of the administration and the Attorney General to produce certain documents, the Attorney General, having agreed to produce certain documents, then refusing to do so, Chairman ISSA, leading up to the vote in committee the other day had said all along, if the Attorney General had produced the documents, that there would be a postponement of the hearing.

And in the same fashion, Mr. Speaker, I say to the gentleman, the Demo-

cratic whip, if the Attorney General would do what it is he committed to do and produce the documents, we'll postpone the vote. We've not seen any indication of that. He has not done that. And that's why I've announced the vote.

Mr. HOYER. Let me ask the gentleman, does the gentleman intend to go the Rules Committee to get a rule, or bring the privileged resolution directly to the floor?

I yield to my friend.

□ 1330

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I would say that some of that is still in discussion, but this resolution does have privilege.

Mr. HOYER. With respect to another piece of legislation, I would like to ask the gentleman about the Violence Against Women Act, which, again, the Senate passed in an overwhelmingly bipartisan fashion and which we passed in a relatively partisan fashion over here, where the parties were split.

Will the gentleman tell me whether or not he knows the status of that legislation and whether or not we expect to consider that anytime soon.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I would just say to the gentleman, as he knows, the Senate has the so-called "blue slip" problem with its bill, and that is about as far as I know as to the progress in the Senate.

As the gentleman knows, we passed the bill here in the House. We did so in recognizing the suggestions and incorporating the suggestions that the GAO had made as to how to streamline the grant programs on the Violence Against Women Act to allow for dollars to reach victims in a more expeditious manner. We wholeheartedly support the passage of that as the gentleman saw when it passed the House. We would like to see a resolution on this.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman.

As the gentleman knows, we believe that the bill that passed the House on the Violence Against Women Act left out a lot of women. It reduced the scope that the Senate passed with, again, a bipartisan vote with, frankly, all the women on the Republican side of the aisle in the United States Senate voting for the Senate bill. We think the House bill restricted the coverage of that bill. It seems to me that we ought to be against violence against all women and other persons who may be subject to domestic violence. We would hope that that matter could be resolved, frankly, along the lines of making sure that all people are protected from domestic violence.

Lastly, may I ask the gentleman what he expects the schedule for the balance of July to be. Again, I would reiterate, as the gentleman knows, we have very, very few days left, less than 30 full days between now and the election following this week. There are another 8 days that are 6:30 days, or some number, either 7 or 8 6:30 days, so we don't have very much time to deal with

some of the pressing problems, including dealing with middle class tax cuts to make sure that working people in this country who are having a hard time making ends meet don't get an increase in their taxes on January 1.

Will the gentleman tell me what he expects the schedule to be in the month of July.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I will respond to the gentleman and say to the gentleman that, again, if he looks at the schedule, we are scheduled and have been in accord with that schedule and in session more days this year than we were in a similar year last session. So I would say to the gentleman the schedule is right on track. The predictability, the certainty of this schedule, has allowed for the work to continue.

We will be here throughout July. Our intention is to continue to focus on job creation. We will be looking, obviously, towards the Supreme Court and what its actions may bring next week on the issue of ObamaCare. If we have to act in response to that to assure all Americans that we want and care about their health care, we will do so. If the Court does not strike down the bill in its entirety, the gentleman knows our conference is fully committed to the total repeal of the ObamaCare bill.

In July, we will continue to focus on that bill and its impact on employers. We also are very concerned about the overreach of the regulatory agencies in this town and intend to bring forward a bill with a series of provisions which will address the red tape that has begun to strangle the innovation and growth in this economy.

We will also be very focused on a measure to stop the tax hike that is facing the American people this year. If you look at the enormity of the tax hike, it is something that is hanging over this economy, that is hanging over the mindset of small business people and working families. I don't think anybody would advocate raising taxes, especially in this economy.

That will be the outline of our work with, obviously, some other measures that may be brought up in July.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for his comment.

Let me just add, Mr. Speaker, that, clearly, when you look at the Congress to which he referred in terms of its productivity in the 2007 and 2008 years, we think the productivity was very much higher. I won't go through the litany of those figures; but I think, if the majority leader reviews them, he will see in terms of the productivity of the Congress that we moved America much further forward.

Having said that, I want to say that we hope that we will continue to focus on jobs. I know I share the gentleman's view—and I think all of us share the view—that we want to have reasonable regulations that help grow the economy, not impede its growth. We're for that. We may have a difference of opinion on what that does when we think of deregulating the protection of our en-

vironment, when we think of deregulating the safety of our financial markets. When we took the referee off the field, it had an extraordinarily negative impact on this country and on every taxpayer in this country and on every business in this country. It was not useful. It was not helpful.

I think we have a difference of opinion on whether or not we want to make sure there is a level playing field, a fair playing field, for all the participants in our economy—both businesses and consumers. Clearly, there was an effort that was being made to undermine the ability of the CFTC to fully oversee what was a market that went out of control. As a result, there were dire consequences to our country and its fiscal status.

So I am hopeful that we don't pursue a regulatory agenda, which is an agenda with the net result of taking the referee off the field. I don't think the American public wants that, and I don't really think that that's reasonable. Further, I think they think we really need to be focused on things that will immediately grow this economy. The highway bill would have done that. Unfortunately, that highway bill has stayed in limbo for too long a time. I am hopeful that we can move it.

Unless the gentleman has something further to say, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, JUNE 25, 2012

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

MOTIONS TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 4348, SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2012, PART II

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees on H.R. 4348.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Hoyer moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 4348 be instructed to recede from disagreement to the amendment of the Senate:

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

clude extraneous materials on my motion to instruct.

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

There was no objection.

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

Tomorrow will mark, as I said a little earlier, 100 days since the United States Senate approved its bipartisan compromise highway bill in the United States Senate. There were 74 Senators who voted for that. Essentially half of the Republican Conference in the United States Senate voted for that bill.

There has been a bill in the House committee. That bill has languished in the House committee for many, many months—in fact, for about 4 months after the Speaker said he wanted to bring it to the floor. It has not come to the floor, apparently, because the Republican Party is divided on that bill, and they don't have the votes for that bill.

□ 1340

That measure passed the Senate 74–22, and it would have been, by the way, 75–22 had FRANK LAUTENBERG been there. He made that statement on the floor. That's three-quarters of the Senate, with the support of 22 Senate Republicans.

Americans are wishing that we would come together, reason together, and act together to give certainty to them, to the economy, and to their country. Unfortunately, the House bill that was passed was effectively a bill simply to go to conference. I know my friend—and he is my friend—Mr. SHUSTER from Pennsylvania will say that in the article that was written, that it was simply “that House bill” to which he was referring. I take him at his word that he was referring to that. But very frankly, others have said that there were items in the bill in committee that were critically important to them that ought to be in the conference committee report, and obviously the Senate would not agree to those.

This bill, to which I refer and which this motion to instruct refers, is supported by chambers of commerce in cities and counties across this Nation.

This is truly a bipartisan piece of legislation in the great tradition of transportation bills passed since the Eisenhower era. The gentleman who is managing the time on the Republican side, his father was a great proponent of infrastructure investment, a great leader in this Congress on infrastructure, and, in fact, participated—every time that I think he brought a bill out as ranking member, it was passed in a bipartisan fashion. Unfortunately, we haven't gotten to that point at this point of time.

Instead of taking up that bill, the Senate bill, and allowing us to have a vote on it here in the House—in my opinion, if the Republican leadership let its Members vote free of influence by the leadership, that bill would have