

McDermott	Rehberg	Smith (NE)
McGovern	Reichert	Smith (NJ)
McHenry	Renacci	Smith (TX)
McIntyre	Ribble	Southerland
McKeon	Richardson	Speier
McKinley	Richmond	Stark
McMorris	Rigell	Stearns
Rodgers	Rivera	Stivers
Meehan	Roby	Stutzman
Mica	Roe (TN)	Sullivan
Michaud	Rogers (AL)	Sutton
Miller (FL)	Rogers (KY)	Terry
Miller (MI)	Rogers (MI)	Thompson (CA)
Miller, Gary	Rokita	Thompson (MS)
Miller, George	Ros-Lehtinen	Thompson (PA)
Moore	Roskam	Thornberry
Mulvaney	Ross (AR)	Tiberi
Murphy (CT)	Ross (FL)	Tierney
Murphy (PA)	Royce	Tipton
Myrick	Runyan	Tonko
Napolitano	Ruppersberger	Tsongas
Neugebauer	Rush	Turner (NY)
Noem	Ryan (OH)	Turner (OH)
Nugent	Ryan (WI)	Upton
Nunes	Sánchez, Linda	Velázquez
Nunnelee	T.	Visclosky
Olson	Sánchez, Loretta	Walberg
Olver	Sarbanes	Walden
Pallone	Scalise	Walsh (IL)
Pastor (AZ)	Schakowsky	Walz (MN)
Paulsen	Schiff	Wasserman
Pearce	Schilling	Schultz
Pelosi	Schmidt	Waters
Perlmutter	Schock	Watt
Peters	Schrader	Waxman
Peterson	Schwartz	Webster
Petri	Schweikert	Welch
Pingree (ME)	Scott (SC)	West
Pitts	Scott (VA)	Westmoreland
Platts	Scott, Austin	Whitfield
Polis	Scott, David	Wilson (FL)
Pompeo	Sensenbrenner	Wilson (SC)
Posey	Serrano	Wittman
Price (GA)	Sessions	Wolf
Price (NC)	Sewell	Womack
Quayle	Sherman	Woolsey
Quigley	Shimkus	Yoder
Rahall	Shuster	Young (FL)
Rangel	Simpson	Young (IN)
Reed	Slaughter	

## NAYS—7

Amash	Huizenga (MI)	Woodall
Goodlatte	Hurt	
Griffith (VA)	Palazzo	

## NOT VOTING—44

Bonner	Lipinski	Pence
Buerkle	Lowey	Poe (TX)
Campbell	Lynch	Reyes
Cardoza	Mack	Rohrabacher
Clyburn	Marchant	Rooney
Conyers	McNerney	Rothman (NJ)
Ellison	Meeks	Roybal-Allard
Engel	Miller (NC)	Shuler
Filner	Moran	Sires
Grijalva	Nadler	Smith (WA)
Gutierrez	Neal	Towns
Inslee	Owens	Van Hollen
Johnson (IL)	Pascrell	Yarmuth
Kingston	Paul	Young (AK)
Kinzing (IL)	Payne	

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1903

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall 35, I was away from the Capitol due to prior commitments to my constituents. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, February 6, 2012, I had a previously scheduled meeting with business leaders in Champaign County, Illinois. As a result, I am unable to attend votes this evening. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on H.R. 1162, the New York City Natural Gas Supply Enhancement Act; "aye" on H.R. 1162, to provide the Quileute Indian Tribe Tsunami and Flood Protection Act; and "aye" on the H. Res. 537, the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 1734, the Civilian Property Realignment Act.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I missed the two rollcall votes today.

Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall vote No. 34, on H. Res. 537—Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 1734—Civilian Property Realignment Act. Additionally, had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall vote No. 35, on H.R. 1162—To provide the Quileute Indian Tribe Tsunami and Flood Protection, and for other purposes.

## REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3581, BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2012

Mr. WOODALL, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112-388) on the resolution (H. Res. 539) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3581) to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to increase transparency in Federal budgeting, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

## CIVILIAN PROPERTY REALIGNMENT ACT

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1734.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 534 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1734.

□ 1903

## 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 consideration of the bill (H.R. 1734) to decrease the deficit by realigning, consolidating, selling, disposing, and improving the efficiency of federal buildings and other civilian real property, and for other purposes, with Mr. WOODALL in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The purpose of H.R. 1734 is to shrink the Federal real property footprint and save billions of taxpayer dollars by selling what we don't need and better utilizing what we keep. In fiscal year 2009 alone, the Federal Government wasted more than \$1.7 billion in operating underused properties. Unfortunately, under existing law, solving this problem is not easy—the process is too cumbersome and congested with red tape.

The administration has tried but has realized it cannot achieve major savings without reform. As a result, H.R. 1734 includes a bipartisan solution to this problem—establishing a civilian BRAC-like process. However, unlike BRAC, the purpose of H.R. 1734 is to save money, and the commission would have to recommend actions that would result in net savings. The administration believes there are several billion dollars worth of high-value properties that could be sold quickly, and I agree with their assessment. Federal real property has been on GAO's high-risk list for nearly a decade now, and our committee, which oversees public buildings, has seen the waste firsthand.

The amended bill creates a nine-member commission that would review Federal properties and recommend specific actions to reduce the Federal building inventory and, more efficiently, house Federal employees. The commission could recommend property sales, consolidations, redevelopments, or other property actions. The bill does not apply to military bases, national parks and recreation areas, or a variety of other Federal properties. The administration would have 30 days to reject the recommendations or forward them to Congress for an up-or-down vote. If approved, agencies would be required to implement them.

In conclusion, let me say that both Republican and Democrat administrations have tried to work within the system to get rid of unneeded Federal property and have failed. Both parties know the process is broken and have proposed an independent BRAC-like commission to solve the problem. I believe this bill is a big step in the right direction, and I thank you for your consideration.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in opposition to H.R. 1734, the Civilian Property Realignment Act.

Both Democrats and Republicans agree that we need a system to dispose of and consolidate excess Federal property. I have worked diligently with the

chairman for such a bill for most of this year. However, the bill before us does not reflect the bipartisan compromise I agreed to. Moreover, I have just learned that the President also opposes the bill, and apparently, it does not even reflect a compromise among Republicans.

I opposed this bill in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and it passed on a party-line vote. The bill before us today is essentially the same bill that I opposed at the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee markup. Shortly after that markup, the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, on which I also serve, approved a bipartisan alternative bill by voice vote, which I supported because it did not have the issues I have with the bill before us today.

Why was the Transportation and Infrastructure bill rushed to the Rules Committee on Friday and quickly brought to the floor today?

Why didn't we take the time to craft a bill that could pass the House with bipartisan support and that could stand a chance to pass in the Senate?

□ 1910

Most importantly, Mr. Chairman, why isn't the bipartisan bill that I agreed to before us on the floor this evening? When I testified before the Rules Committee on Friday, I indicated that I would support the bill if the protections in existing law for the environment and the homeless were included in the bill. These protections are not included in the bill.

The Rules Committee reported out a bill with no self-executing amendments. Instead, they made several amendments—including mine—in order for full consideration. I could have done that all along. There are no assurances whatsoever that my amendments would be adopted on this floor. The only way to ensure that my amendments were included in the bill would have been for the Rules Committee to have adopted a rule that made my amendments self-executing and, therefore, a part of the bill before us today.

I will not stand here today to support a bill I've consistently opposed at Transportation and Infrastructure Committee markups on a hope and prayer that my amendments would have been adopted on the floor. I will not offer, as amendments, provisions I had every reason to expect would have been a part of the bill reported out of the Rules Committee. To offer my amendments separately is to greatly risk their defeat while the bill before us, which I oppose, still passes. I will not be used to give bipartisan cover to this bill or to paper over a divide among Republicans.

The subcommittee that I serve on had two excellent hearings on the creation of the Civilian Property Realignment Commission. I support the original bipartisan idea of assembling a Civilian Property Realignment Commis-

sion, but there are several portions of H.R. 1734 before us on the floor right now that do not reflect a revised bipartisan bill. I have consistently attempted to make the needed changes to this bill, and they were unacceptable at the full committee markup and then at Rules, where my changes were not incorporated into the bill on this floor today.

As subcommittee ranking member, I was not informed that if I wanted the changes in the bill, I would have to offer my amendments separately on the floor. Who would have agreed to that as a bipartisan compromise?

I have been consistent in offering amendments to this bill to eliminate the waiver of the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, and the inclusion of a review of excess Federal property for homeless service providers and other public benefit conveyances by the Civilian Property Realignment Commission that would have been created by this bill.

Curiously, the chairman now brings to the floor his own amendment concerning homeless providers which mirrors the homelessness section of the amendment assigned to me, but he does not include in his amendment the NEPA provision section of my amendment to which he and I agreed in order to reach a compromise.

The bill, as it stands, severely limits the review of Federal property for a possible transfer to homeless providers and other public benefit conveyances by the Civilian Property Realignment Commission. By bypassing McKinney-Vento in the disposal process, the bill unnecessarily reduces the pool of Federal properties available for transfer to homeless service providers. In these difficult times, extinguishing the right of first refusal for homeless providers would be a severe blow to a sector that has already had to contend with a huge downturn in charitable giving during the recent recession. The experience, moreover, with homeless service providers is that they take only the smallest properties. And I had already agreed to shorten the time period for providers to claim properties.

Secondly, the bill, as reported, would waive the application of the National Environmental Policy Act to some actions of the commission which I have always strongly opposed. Section 18(b) waives compliance with NEPA for the actions of the President, the commission, or any Federal agency when considering any of the commission's recommendations, except during the process of property disposal and during the process of relocating functions from a property being disposed of or realigned to another location.

It is important to carefully conduct the environmental review on any decision to close, relocate, or reconfigure a Federal facility in time for the commission to consider the full implications of its actions. The current language precludes a full review of the actions until after the decision to sell or

dispose of a piece of Federal property has already been made. This problem could have easily been fixed by including language that required agencies to submit information about the environmental conditions of a building and any information that the agency might have had about the potential impacts to the environment if a property was disposed of, consolidated, or redeveloped. Therefore, I must oppose the bill before us, and I urge opposition until a bipartisan base bill reflecting the issues I have discussed is presented on the floor.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, just to quickly respond, let me first say thank you to the ranking member of the subcommittee. We have worked on this bill for a year. We agreed on language. We accepted the administration's language and worked with OMB on making sure that this was a bill that not only passed with bipartisan support but was something that the Senate would welcome and the President would sign. So it's been a good year. We've worked very well together, I think, on the issue up until this point.

And I know that it became somewhat contentious in committee because we had several different properties listed in the bill to help pay for and make sure that this was a pay-as-you-go bill. We pulled those out in an effort to create bipartisanship and to make sure that those issues that the other side of the aisle wanted addressed were addressed, but we went a step further.

As the ranking member of the committee asked for several different amendments, we agreed to those amendments. The environmental issue, we agreed to her amendment. Even though OMB had suggested that they didn't want lawsuits to apply, we went ahead and, in a sense of bipartisanship, wanted to agree to the ranking member's amendment on this. As well, the homeless, we agreed to a \$2 million exemption to make sure the homeless were well taken care of. That was changed to \$3 million. We agreed to that. It was changed to \$5 million. We agreed to that as well, even though I can't imagine the homeless wanting to utilize a \$5 million piece of property—it seems somewhat excessive—but in a true spirit of bipartisanship, we agreed.

I keep my word. I will continue to support the ranking member's amendment on the floor today. As well, I have included it in my amendment. I stand by my word, and I hope others on this floor would do the same.

At this time, Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER), the former chairman of the subcommittee.

□ 1920

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank the gentleman from California for yielding.

I do stand here as the former chairman of the Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management Subcommittee who served

alongside the distinguished delegate from the District of Columbia. For the years I was chairman, we worked very well together, and so it is a great disappointment that I come to the floor tonight when we thought we had an agreement. If fact, we did have an agreement. The chairman of the subcommittee and the chairman of the full committee were willing to accept the gentlelady's amendment and put it in the bill. But yet here we are today turning this into a partisan bill, which as I said is very disappointing. She said she couldn't come to the floor just on hope. She had more than hope; she had the word of the chairman of the subcommittee and the word of the chairman of the full committee.

So I am here tonight in strong support of the Civilian Property Realignment Act. There are immediate savings: a savings up to \$1 billion a year this year alone, and \$15 billion over the next 10 years. It reduces the size of government. The commission was tasked with literally reducing the Federal footprint.

And as we know, we have an example right down on Pennsylvania Avenue. The Old Post Office building is going to be put up for a long-term lease. We've got some of the premier hotel operators in the world that want to turn that into a first-rate premier hotel right on Pennsylvania Avenue. Whether it's the Waldorf Astoria or the Marriott or the Trump organization, they all want to take that and immediately turn it into a premier hotel. There will be construction jobs, jobs working in the hotel for the long term, so it's really unfortunate that this bill is going to be made partisan this evening.

The bill establishes a real property commission, a nine person Civilian Property Realignment Commission that will serve to consolidate the footprint, maximize the utilization rate of Federal buildings and facilities, reduce the reliance on costly leased space, sell or redevelop high-value assets that are underutilized—as we talked about, the old Post Office Building. It reduces the operating and maintenance costs of Federal civilian real properties through the realignment of other real properties. It reduces redundancy, overlap, and costs associated with field offices. It creates incentives for Federal agencies to achieve greater efficiency in the inventories of real property the Federal Government has. It facilitates and expedites the sale or disposal of unneeded civilian properties. And it assists Federal agencies in achieving the government's sustainability goals by reducing excess space, inventory, energy consumption, as well as by leveraging new technologies.

As the former chair of this committee, I held hearings about the Federal courthouses. We have overbuilt Federal courthouses in many places in this country for years. For years we've done that. This is going to take a step in reducing what we've been doing and consolidating and doing things that are

appropriate and proper to save the taxpayers' money.

It takes the politics out of the process. It provides for expedited review and up-or-down consideration of the commission's recommendations, just like the BRAC process.

Congress would have the opportunity to disapprove of the committee's recommendations en bloc only, not in piecemeal, which is ensuring that politics will be removed from this process.

It provides for a one-time appropriation of \$82 million to fully offset from the GSA's building and acquisition amount, after which proceeds from the sale will be used to repay the Treasury.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. DENHAM. I yield the gentleman another 1 minute.

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank the gentleman.

It deals exclusively with public properties—military installations, properties deemed essential for reasons of national security, and national parks are not subject to this jurisdiction.

Again, I come to the floor tonight with deep disappointment in the ranking member, who for so many years has worked in a bipartisan way on this subcommittee. Text was available since December, so it's no surprise. The subcommittee chairman and full committee chairman agreed to accept her amendment in its entirety, and most importantly, and something that's lacking in Washington today and lacking in Congress, is people not keeping their word, and the chairman of the subcommittee is keeping his word, which is extremely important in this whole process.

I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 1734, the Civilian Property Realignment Act.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

I hope the gentleman is not implying that I do not keep my word, and let me be clear what my word was. I gave my word that I would support a bipartisan bill, not that I would support the opportunity to offer amendments on the floor.

The gentleman knows quite well that the NEPA amendment is an amendment that his side generally does not support. Let me be plain. They generally don't support NEPA. The reason that the gentleman was willing to somehow come forward with what would appear to be a redundant amendment on homelessness—since mine already had homelessness in it—is because he wanted to separate himself from the NEPA amendment, and he knows full well that I would never support his bill without the NEPA provisions that I have spent months—months—changing.

This is a tragic collapse of what had been a bipartisan process until we went to the Rules Committee, when somebody made it clear, when somebody made it clear—and I don't know who it was—that this bill could be brought

forward, the very bill I voted against, leaving it to this Member to take her chances that the other side of the aisle would support an amendment of the kind they have resolutely refused to support on the floor but that she believed that because a compromise had been worked out with the chairman, they might on this occasion support. I keep my word as well.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS).

Mr. CUMMINGS. I thank the gentlelady for yielding to me, Mr. Speaker, and I rise in opposition to H.R. 1734, the Civilian Property Realignment Act.

Although I support the efforts to improve the process used to dispose of Federal property, I believe in its current form this legislation inappropriately limits the access that service providers for the homeless have traditionally had to surplus Federal property.

Current law requires that all Federal surplus properties be considered for use by entities that provide assistance for the homeless. This legislation would create a BRAC-like commission to dispose of unused Federal property, and would require a majority vote of this commission before any specific property could be considered for homeless assistance.

This provision is misguided and should have been eliminated before this legislation reached the floor. I submitted to the Rules Committee a commonsense amendment that would have fixed this problem. My amendment would have ensured that section 501 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which provides for the discounted conveyance of surplus Federal property to homeless assistance providers, would continue to apply to all properties approved for disposal by the commission established by H.R. 1734.

Unfortunately, my amendment was not made in order. There is no evidence that the current process for reviewing properties for use by homeless assistance providers has slowed property disposals. Indeed, more than 14,000 properties have completed Title V reviews and remain on the government's books awaiting disposal.

According to the National Center on Family Homelessness, the number of homeless children in America increased by more than 448,000 from 2007 to 2010 due to the financial crisis. Approximately 1.6 million children—1 in 45 children—were homeless in 2010, a 38 percent increase over the level of child homelessness in 2007.

With access to surplus Federal properties, homeless assistance providers can provide housing, support services, and employment assistance to help the homeless get back on their feet. We should not make careless alterations to the McKinney-Vento program.

I understand the gentlelady from the District of Columbia plans to offer an amendment that would require the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development to apply

section 501 of McKinney-Vento to the extent practicable. If she does, I would support that.

This is a step in the right direction, and I commend her efforts. But there should be no limitations on the size and value of the properties that should be subject to review for potential use by homeless assistance groups. For that reason, I cannot support this legislation so long as it contains provisions that would be harmful to the homeless and would reduce resources available to homeless assistance providers.

I urge Members to oppose H.R. 1734.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, just to reiterate one more time, I support the gentlelady's amendment. I look forward to voting on it as long as she brings it up. We support the homeless in this bill. We agreed to it in Rules. We still support it today, and there will definitely be sufficient votes on this side of the aisle if she decides to bring it up. And you know what? If it doesn't pass, then vote against the bill. But if you believe in the homeless issue, then put your amendment up and let's have the votes on it.

□ 1930

At this time, Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART), also a former subcommittee chairman.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. It was a privilege for 2 years to be the ranking member of this subcommittee, and I will tell you that this subcommittee has never been a partisan subcommittee, and I commend Chairman DENHAM for keeping that tradition of focusing on the issues and working with both sides of the aisle to try to get good products without getting into this partisan melee. So I commend the chairman for continuing in that tradition. He's done so in a marvelous way.

And here's another example: he sat down with the ranking member, and they worked out all these issues. The chairman actually went to the Rules Committee, testified in the Rules Committee in favor of making these amendments, the ranking member's amendments, so that they would be in order. Lo and behold, the Rules Committee did what both of them, in a bipartisan way, asked for. They allowed for those amendments to be in order.

Now, I have the highest admiration and respect for the ranking member. I have worked very closely with her, but I'm a little bit, frankly, intrigued. So the ranking member now says, well, if her amendments that the chairman asked to be made in order, the amendments that he supported, that he continues to support, that he says that he supported, that he supported in the Rules Committee, she says if those amendments don't pass, well, then she would vote against the bill, so therefore she's not going to bring up the amendments. Excuse me?

What usually happens is, heck, you bring up amendments even if the rank-

ing member or the chairman doesn't agree with you. But if you have the agreement of the chairman of the committee, he's here again stating it, who's worked with you the entire process, the chairman of the committee helped you get those amendments made in order in the Rules Committee, they come to the floor made in order, here they are ready to discuss, and then you say, no, now I'm not going to put up the amendments because if they don't pass, now I'll vote against the bill.

I agree with the chairman. Put the amendments up. If the amendments don't pass, even with the support of the chairman and the ranking member, then there's good reason for the ranking member to vote against it. But to withdraw an amendment when you have everybody's support, when you are pretty much guaranteed—

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. DENHAM. I yield the gentleman 1 additional minute.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. You're pretty much guaranteed as much as you are in this process that they're going to pass because you have the ranking member of one party and the chairman who has worked with the ranking member, they both agree, they're noncontroversial, they're ready to go, and, all of a sudden, the ranking member pulls them back and says, for some reason, I'm going to pull them back if they don't pass, I'm going to vote against the bill, well, bring them up. If they don't pass, vote against the bill. But we won't know in the democratic process if an amendment is going to pass even if the chairman and the ranking member agree with it until you bring it up.

So I would respectfully suggest that the ranking member, whom I admire, just bring up the amendments. The chairman has supported them in the Rules Committee, and he's supporting them now. Bring them up. Let's hopefully work on getting the votes because he is working with you to try to get the votes. If they don't pass, vote against it. But the chances are they're going to pass. Let's let the democratic process go forward.

And, again, I commend the chairman for keeping up the tradition of not bogging down in partisan politics. Mr. Chairman, you are to be commended for that. Thank you, sir.

Ms. NORTON. I will take such time as I may require.

I wish that the chairman—he and I have had a very cordial and an amicable relationship. I only wish that he could guarantee that my amendments would, in fact, pass. I'm afraid that, watching his caucus in operation for a full year when they could not even agree whether or not the United States Government should go into default, I can't blame him for not being able to guarantee they will pass. But let me say why taking my chances that they would pass, even given his good faith hoping they would pass, is not enough.

If he, in fact, wanted to make sure that the amendment passed, then he, of course, would be on the amendment. Instead, he does something curious indeed. He looks at my amendment, dissects it, takes the part of the amendment that he regards as less controversial—and on his side of the aisle—both parts will be controversial, but the least controversial part—and he says, I take this part, it's exactly like the homeless part of the so-called Norton amendment, but the other part that I testified to in Rules Committee he is not identified with that amendment on this floor.

Now, I ask Members, what would you think if the chairman had gone with you to Rules saying he supported the amendment, and then when we got to the floor was willing to stand up—sorry—went to the trouble of pulling out one section of my amendment only to claim as his own? Why wouldn't he simply embrace my amendment?

Worse, why wouldn't he have made sure that this was a bipartisan bill so that I would not be put in this position? And this is important to understand. If I bring up my amendment separately and it goes down, what will be before the House is essentially the bill I voted against in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Do I look like a fool?

I voted against the bill that is on the floor today. In all good faith, the chairman cannot guarantee that the full bill with the changes that he and I agreed to will be the bill that, in fact, emerges here this evening. In fact, let me be even more blunt. What is more likely to emerge here this evening is the original bill that I, in fact, opposed on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The only way to make sure that my major objection, which was to NEPA, is included in the bill would have been for this bill to come forward with what I agreed to in the bill already. For me to have to come to the floor to beg that a part of this bill which was central to my agreement to support it now get a vote, especially from a side of this Chamber which has consistently voted against sections like the section that is at issue here, is to defy—is not to understand how to put together a compromise.

If you have a compromise and you come to the floor, you don't take out part of what the compromise was about, leaving the other part so that she can fend herself on the floor knowing full well that the chances of getting that part of the amendment passed are, based on past experience, are not very great.

So the reason I oppose it is because I believe that perhaps, and I don't know if other amendments on the Democratic side would be accepted or not, but I believe that as it now stands, the bill will look essentially like the bill that I spent all year opposing because my major reasons for opposing it have not been incorporated in the bill that will be the final bill voted on. And if I

were to depend only on an amendment on this floor to get this provision, which has always been controversial on their side in the bill, then I don't think there's anybody on that side would guarantee that on their side my amendment with the NEPA provision would, in fact, pass.

In that event, what I would be left with is the very bill that I have voted against for an entire year, and that is why I object to the way in which this bill has been handled.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, we're talking a lot around this issue. The gentlelady wants a guarantee. Let me give her a guarantee. She can bring her amendment up right now; we'll do it on a voice vote. It will be in the text of the bill within 30 minutes, and that is exactly what we will be voting on tomorrow.

It's very simple. We have the votes. We want the amendment. We want the Democrat support and want this to be a bipartisan bill. So all she has to do is bring up the amendment right now, we'll voice vote it, and it will be part of the bill. So now really the question is, do you or don't you want the bill?

Ms. NORTON. I want the bill you and I agreed upon, Mr. Chairman, and that was the bill that had NEPA in it and that had homeless in it.

And let me ask you, why did you come forward with an amendment that only has the homeless in it, that is the exact mirror image of the homeless section of my bill, but you did not include the NEPA section?

□ 1940

Mr. DENHAM. Reclaiming my time, I have a second amendment just in case, unfortunately, trust leaves this room. In the unfortunate case that somebody does not offer their amendment, I've got my own. But I am happy to withdraw my amendment and voice vote her amendment right here so it's in the bill and we have a bipartisan agreement.

I'm not sure what the concern is. You want a guarantee? Here is a guarantee, let's do it, bipartisan. Let's get unanimous support out of this House and show the American people we can agree on cutting waste, we can agree on creating jobs, we can agree on selling some of the things we just don't need.

#### PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Parliamentary inquiry of the Chair, if I may.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida will state his inquiry.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, is it not true that if this language would have been in the bill, that there's no guarantee that somebody would have not done an amendment in the Rules Committee to take it out, so that there is no more different guarantee if it was in than if it was out? Is that not true?

The CHAIR. The gentleman has not stated a proper parliamentary inquiry. That is a matter for debate.

Mr. DENHAM. At this time, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to yield 3 minutes to

the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY. I thank the gentleman from California.

I do stand in strong support of the Civilian Property Realignment Act, and I'll tell you why. I come from the private sector where sometimes assets become liabilities. An asset becomes a liability when it costs you so much to insure it, secure it, and maintain it that it no longer serves the purpose it was originally designed for.

When you look at this, I look at this as almost—there's a TV show. I haven't seen it, but they tell me it's called "Hoarders." This is where people hoard things that they have no use for, but it takes up all space in their house and it takes up their personal wealth.

We are looking at a situation right now in this country where we have to reduce the size of government and reduce the cost. Why? Because it's the hardworking American taxpayer that foots the bill for all these properties that are being unused or underused. Wouldn't it just make sense to take them from the liability side and put it on the asset side? It no longer will cost the American taxpayers money to secure, insure, and maintain. It would go into the private sector. It would create jobs. These people would convert these into a use that makes more sense for today, and they would start paying taxes on it. This is a win-win situation for the American taxpayer.

I would submit to you, if this were not a reelection year, we would not be going through gymnastics in this House of things that make absolutely no sense to the people who pay for them; that's the American taxpayer.

After sitting here for 1 year and watching this ridiculous tennis match and trying to figure out if we really came to reduce the size of government, if we really came to reduce the debt that we have, if we really came to create jobs, if we really came for something that makes sense for America, why are we wasting America's time by debating issues that don't make sense for the people that pick up the tab, and that's the American taxpayer? It is not this House that pays for it. It is those homes around our district and in this country.

I have gotten to the point where I cannot stand listening to this garbage that comes out of here. It does nothing but create animosity. It does nothing to fix the situation. We have absolutely reached way past the midnight hour.

So I strongly support the gentleman's bill, the Civilian Property Realignment Act. Let's change these things from being liabilities into assets. Let's take the government's foot off the throat of the American taxpayers. Let's turn this country around and make it a useful situation.

I thank the gentleman. Please stand strong. We need to get these issues done.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR. The Chair would remind all Members to direct their remarks to the Chair.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from the District of Columbia.

Ms. NORTON. Well, I don't agree that we're past the midnight hour, but I agree that we're past the point of no return.

The gentleman wanted to talk about cost. This bill costs \$68 million, a great deal more than another bill that I do support, the Oversight and Government Reform bill. I serve on that committee as well. I was willing, since this bill was coming to the floor first and since I had worked with the gentleman on this bill all along, to support this bill, but I don't think you can make the case that this bill is less costly than the Oversight and Government Reform bill. I would have thought that my colleagues on the other side would have gotten together to work that problem of two different bills out for themselves.

My chief regret is to have spent a lot of time and effort and conversation that I believed was getting somewhere. Perhaps it was all a big misunderstanding. But if it were, if that's what it was, we certainly informed the other side about my concern before we came. That concern remains.

I don't have any further speakers. I regretfully cannot support the bill before us.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, once again, this is the amazing thing about politics. You can have an agreement and support completely the other side's opinion and still have a disagreement only in this House.

I support getting this country back in line with our fiscal responsibility. We have a \$15 trillion debt, and we've got to do something about it. We have an opportunity to have a bipartisan agreement, one that the President is asking for, one he included in his State of the Union as something to get done. If he cannot get his own party, if he cannot get the Senate to come along with his ideas, how are we the obstructionists?

We want to sell properties. We want to sell the noncontroversial properties. Fourteen thousand properties have been identified as excess, underutilized properties that we could be moving immediately. We could be creating billions of dollars to pay down our debt. We could be redeveloping so many of these historic buildings that are sitting empty, creating jobs, getting these properties back on the tax rolls. This is a bipartisan solution that I'm amazed at some of the rhetoric tonight.

Again, if the ranking member wants a guarantee, we'll give her a guarantee tonight. Bring up the amendment. We will voice vote it right now and she will have a guarantee it's in the bill. But yet she doesn't want to do it. So I have a separate amendment. If we cannot get the other side of the aisle to present theirs, we will present ours.

Again, we've got to get rid of some of this waste, this additional expense—\$1.9 billion we pay just in operating costs of these properties we don't use today, properties that are sitting vacant. If Republicans and Democrats can't agree that an empty building that's not being used, that has no reason to be used in the future, cannot be eliminated to reduce our debt, the real question is: What can we agree on? This is the most simple of deficit reduction plans. This is one the President has asked for multiple times.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 112-11 is adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of further amendment under the 5-minute rule and shall be considered as read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

#### H.R. 1734

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

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Civilian Property Realignment Act" or "CITA".

#### SEC. 2. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are—

- (1) to consolidate the footprint of Federal buildings and facilities;
- (2) to maximize the utilization rate of Federal buildings and facilities;
- (3) to reduce the reliance on leased space;
- (4) to sell or redevelop high value assets that are underutilized to obtain the highest and best value for the taxpayer and maximize the return to the taxpayer;
- (5) to reduce the operating and maintenance costs of Federal civilian real properties through the realignment of real properties by consolidating, colocating, and reconfiguring space, and other operational efficiencies;
- (6) to reduce redundancy, overlap, and costs associated with field offices;
- (7) to create incentives for Federal agencies to achieve greater efficiency in their inventories of civilian real property;
- (8) to facilitate and expedite the sale or disposal of unneeded civilian properties; and
- (9) to assist Federal agencies in achieving the Government's sustainability goals by reducing excess space, inventory, and energy consumption, as well as by leveraging new technologies.

#### SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act, unless otherwise expressly stated, the following definitions apply:

- (1) **FEDERAL CIVILIAN REAL PROPERTY AND CIVILIAN REAL PROPERTY.**—
- (A) **PROPERTY.**—The terms "Federal civilian real property" and "civilian real property" refer to Federal real property assets, including public buildings as defined in section 3301 of title 40, United States Code, occupied and improved grounds, leased space, or other physical structures under the custody and control of Federal agency.
- (B) **FURTHER EXCLUSIONS.**—Subparagraph (A) shall not be construed as including any of the following types of property:
  - (i) A base, camp, post station, yard, center, homeport facility for any ship, or any activity

under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense or Coast Guard.

- (ii) **Properties that are excluded for reasons of national security by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.**

- (iii) **Properties that are excepted from the definition of "property" under section 102(9) of title 40, United States Code.**

- (iv) **Indian and Native Alaskan properties including—**

- (I) **any property within the limits of any Indian reservation to which the United States owns title for the benefit of an Indian tribe; and**

- (II) **any property title which is held in trust by the United States for the benefit of any Indian tribe or individual or held by an Indian tribe or individual subject to restriction by the United States against alienation.**

- (v) **Properties operated and maintained by the Tennessee Valley Authority pursuant to the Tennessee Valley Authority Act of 1933 (16 U.S.C. 831, et seq.**

- (vi) **Postal properties owned by the United States Postal Service.**

- (vii) **Properties used in connection with Federal programs for agricultural, recreational, and conservation purposes, including research in connection with the programs.**

- (viii) **Properties used in connection with river, harbor, flood control, reclamation, or power projects.**

- (ix) **Properties located outside the United States operated or maintained by the Department of State or the United States Agency for International Development.**

- (2) **FEDERAL AGENCY.**—The term "Federal agency" means an executive department or independent establishment in the executive branch of the Government, and a wholly owned Government corporation.

- (3) **ADMINISTRATOR.**—The term "Administrator" means the Administrator of General Services.

- (4) **COMMISSION.**—The term "Commission" means the Civilian Property Realignment Commission.

- (5) **OMB.**—The term "OMB" means the Office of Management and Budget.

- (6) **FIELD OFFICE.**—The term "field office" means any Federal office that is not the Headquarters office location for the Federal agency.

#### SEC. 4. COMMISSION.

- (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established an independent commission to be known as the Civilian Property Realignment Commission, referred to in this Act as the "Commission".

- (b) **DUTIES.**—The Commission shall carry out the duties as specified in this Act.

- (c) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

- (1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commission shall be composed of a Chairperson appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and 8 members appointed by the President.

- (2) **APPOINTMENTS.**—In selecting individuals for appointments to the Commission, the President shall consult with—

- (A) the Speaker of the House of Representatives concerning the appointment of 2 members;

- (B) the majority leader of the Senate concerning the appointment of 2 members;

- (C) the minority leader of the House of Representatives concerning the appointment of 1 member; and

- (D) the minority leader of the Senate concerning the appointment of 1 member.

- (3) **TERMS.**—The term for each member of the Commission shall be 6 years.

- (4) **VACANCIES.**—Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

- (5) **QUALIFICATIONS.**—In selecting individuals for appointment to the Commission, the President shall ensure the Commission contains individuals with expertise representative of the following:
  - (A) Commercial real estate and redevelopment.
  - (B) Government management or operations.

- (C) Community development, including transportation and planning.

- (D) Historic preservation.

#### SEC. 5. COMMISSION MEETINGS.

- (a) **OPEN MEETINGS.**—Each meeting of the Commission, other than meetings in which classified information is to be discussed, shall be open to the public. Any open meeting shall be announced in the Federal Register and the Federal website established by the Commission at least 14 calendar days in advance of a meeting. For all public meetings, the Commission shall release an agenda and a listing of materials relevant to the topics to be discussed.

- (b) **QUORUM AND MEETINGS.**—Seven Commission members shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of conducting business and 3 or more Commission members shall constitute a meeting of the Commission.

- (c) **TRANSPARENCY OF INFORMATION.**—All the proceedings, information, and deliberations of the Commission shall be open, upon request, to the Chairperson and the ranking minority party member, and their respective subcommittee Chairperson and ranking minority party member, of—

- (1) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives;

- (2) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives;

- (3) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

- (4) the Committee on Environmental and Public Works of the Senate; and

- (5) the committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

- (d) **GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE.**—All proceedings, information, and deliberations of the Commission shall be open, upon request, to the Comptroller General of the United States.

#### SEC. 6. COMPENSATION AND TRAVEL EXPENSES.

- (a) **COMPENSATION.**—

- (1) **RATE OF PAY FOR MEMBERS.**—Each member, other than the Chairperson, shall be paid at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the minimum annual rate of basic pay payable for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which the member is engaged in the actual performance of duties vested in the Commission.

- (2) **RATE OF PAY FOR CHAIRPERSON.**—Chairperson shall be paid for each day referred to in paragraph (1) at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the minimum annual rate of basic pay payable for level III of the Executive Schedule under section 5314, of title 5, United States Code.

- (b) **TRAVEL.**—Members shall receive travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with sections 5702 and 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

#### SEC. 7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

- (a) **APPOINTMENT.**—The Commission shall appoint an Executive Director and may disregard the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service.

- (b) **RATE OF PAY FOR DIRECTOR.**—The Executive Director shall be paid at the rate of basic pay payable or level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

#### SEC. 8. STAFF.

- (a) **ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL.**—Subject to subsection (b), the Executive Director, with the approval of the Commission, may appoint and fix the pay of additional personnel.

- (b) **DETAIL EMPLOYEES FROM OTHER AGENCIES.**—Upon request of the Executive Director, the head of any Federal agency may detail any of the personnel of that agency to the Commission to assist the Commission in carrying out its duties under this Act.

- (c) **QUALIFICATIONS.**—Appointments shall be made with consideration of a balance of expertise consistent with the qualifications of representatives described in section 4(c)(5).



**SEC. 9. CONTRACTING AUTHORITY.**

(a) **EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.**—The Commission, to the extent practicable and subject to appropriations made by law, shall use existing contracts entered into by the Administrator for services necessary to carry out the duties of the Commission.

(b) **SPACE.**—The Administrator, in consultation with the Commission, shall identify suitable excess space within the Federal space inventory to house the operations of the Commission.

(c) **PERSONAL PROPERTY.**—The Commission shall use personal property already in the custody and control of the Administrator.

(d) **USE OF SMALL BUSINESSES.**—In exercising its authorities under this section and section 12, the Commission shall use, to the greatest extent practicable, small businesses as defined by section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632).

**SEC. 10. TERMINATION.**

The Commission shall cease operations and terminate 6 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 11. DEVELOPMENT OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSION.**

(a) **SUBMISSIONS OF AGENCY INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Not, later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act and 120 days after the beginning of each fiscal year thereafter, the head of each Federal agency shall submit to the Administrator and the Director of OMB the following:

(1) **CURRENT DATA.**—Current, data of all Federal civilian real properties owned, leased, or controlled by the respective agency, including all relevant information prescribed by the Administrator and the Director of OMB, including data related to the age and condition of the property, operating costs, history of capital expenditures, sustainability metrics, number of Federal employees and functions housed in the respective property, and square footage (including gross, rentable, and usable).

(2) **AGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Recommendations which shall include the following:

(A) Federal civilian properties that can be sold for proceeds and otherwise disposed of, reported as excess, declared surplus, or otherwise no longer meeting the needs of the agency, excluding leasebacks or other such exchange agreements where the property continues to be used by the agency.

(B) Federal civilian properties that can be transferred, exchanged, consolidated, co-located, reconfigured, or redeveloped, so as to reduce the civilian real property inventory, reduce the operating costs of the Government, and create the highest value and return for the taxpayer.

(C) Operational efficiencies that the Government can realize in its operation and maintenance of Federal civilian real properties.

(b) **STANDARDS AND CRITERIA.**—Not later than 60 days after the date specified in subsection (a), the Director of OMB, in consultation with the Administrator, shall review agency recommendations submitted pursuant to subsection (a), and develop consistent standards and criteria, against which agency recommendations will be reviewed. The Director of OMB and the Administrator shall develop recommendations to time Commission based on those standards and criteria. In developing the standards and criteria, the Director of OMB, in consultation with the Administrator, shall incorporate the following:

(1) The extent to which the Federal building or facility could be sold (including property that is no longer meeting the needs of the Federal Government), redeveloped, or otherwise used to produce the highest and best value and return for the taxpayer.

(2) The extent to which the operating and maintenance costs are reduced through consolidating, co-locating, and reconfiguring space, and through realizing other operational efficiencies.

(3) The extent to which the utilization rate is being maximized and is consistent with non-governmental industry standards for the given function or operation.

(4) The extent and timing of potential costs and savings, including the number of years, beginning with the date of completion of the proposed recommendation.

(5) The extent to which reliance on leasing for long-term space needs is reduced.

(6) The extent to which a Federal building or facility aligns with the current mission of the Federal agency.

(7) The extent to which there are opportunities to consolidate similar operations across multiple agencies or within agencies.

(8) The economic impact on existing communities in the vicinity of the Federal building or facility.

(9) The extent to which energy consumption is reduced.

(c) **SPECIAL RULE FOR UTILIZATION RATES.**—Standards developed by the Director of OMB must incorporate and apply clear standard utilization rates consistent throughout each category of space and with non-government space utilization rates. To the extent the space utilization rates of a given agency fall below the utilization rates to be applied under this subsection, the Director may recommend realignment, co-location, consolidation, or other type of action to improve space utilization.

(d) **SUBMISSION TO THE COMMISSION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The standards, criteria, and recommendations developed pursuant to subsection (b) shall be submitted to the Commission with all supporting information, data, analyses, and documentation.

(2) **PUBLICATION.**—The standards, criteria, and recommendations shall be published in the Federal Register and transmitted to the committees designated in section 5(c) and to the Comptroller General of the United States.

(3) **ACCESS TO INFORMATION.**—The Commission shall also have access to all information pertaining to the recommendations, including supporting information, data, analyses, and documentation submitted pursuant to subsection (a). Upon request, Federal agencies shall provide, the Commission any additional information pertaining to its properties.

**SEC. 12. COMMISSION DUTIES.**

(a) **IDENTIFICATION OF PROPERTY REDUCTION OPPORTUNITIES.**—The Commission shall identify opportunities for the Government to reduce significantly its inventory of civilian real property and reduce costs to the Government.

(b) **IDENTIFICATION OF HIGH VALUE ASSETS.**—

(1) **IDENTIFICATION OF CERTAIN PROPERTIES.**—Not later than 180 days after Commission members are appointed pursuant to section 4, the Commission shall identify not less than 5 Federal properties that are not on the list of surplus or excess as of such date with a total fair market value of not less than \$500,000,000 and transmit the list to the President and Congress as Commission recommendations and subject to the approval process described in sections 13 and 14.

(2) **INFORMATION AND DATA.**—In order to meet the goal established under paragraph (1), Federal agencies shall provide, upon receipt, any and all information and data regarding its properties to the Commission. The Commission shall notify the committees listed under section 5(c) of any failure by any agency to comply with a request of the Commission.

(c) **ANALYSIS OF INVENTORY.**—The Commission shall perform an independent analysis of the inventory of Federal civilian real property and the recommendations submitted pursuant to section 11. The Commission shall not be bound or limited by the recommendations submitted pursuant to section 11. If, in the opinion of the Commission, an agency fails to provide needed information, data, or adequate recommendations that meet the standards and criteria, the Commission shall develop such recommendations as it con-

siders appropriate based on existing data contained in the Federal Real Property Profile or other relevant information.

(d) **RECEIPT OF INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS.**—Notwithstanding any other provision or law, the Commission may receive and consider proposals, information, and other data submitted by State and local officials and the private sector. Such information shall be made publicly available.

(e) **ACCOUNTING SYSTEM.**—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall identify or develop and implement a system of accounting to be used to independently evaluate the costs of and returns on the recommendations. Such accounting system shall be applied in developing the Commission's recommendations and determining the highest return to the taxpayer. In applying the accounting system, the Commission shall set a standard performance period.

(f) **PUBLIC HEARING.**—The Commission shall conduct public hearings. All testimony before the Commission at a public hearing under this paragraph shall be presented under oath.

(g) **REPORTING OF INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 120 days after the receipt of recommendations pursuant to section 11, and annually thereafter, the Commission shall transmit to the President, and publicly post on a Federal website maintained by the Commission a report containing the Commission's findings, conclusions, and recommendations for the consolidation, exchange, co-location, reconfiguration, lease reductions, sale, and redevelopment of Federal civilian real properties and for other operational efficiencies that can be realized in the Government's operation and maintenance or such properties.

(2) **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SALE OR DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY.**—To the extent the Commission recommendations include the sale or disposal of real property, these properties may be reported as excess, declared surplus, or determined as no longer meeting the needs of the Federal Government, excluding leasebacks or other such exchange agreements where the property continues to be used by the Federal Government.

(3) **CONSENSUS IN MAJORITY.**—The Commission shall seek to develop consensus recommendations, but if a consensus cannot be obtained, the Commission may include in its report recommendations that are supported by a majority of the Commission.

(h) **FEDERAL WEBSITE.**—The Commission shall establish and maintain a Federal website for the purposes of making relevant information publicly available.

(i) **REVIEW BY GAO.**—The Comptroller General of the United States shall transmit to the Congress and to the Commission a report containing a detailed analysis of the recommendations and selection process.

**SEC. 13. REVIEW BY THE PRESIDENT.**

(a) **REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Upon receipt of the Commission's recommendations, the President shall conduct a review of such recommendations.

(b) **REPORT TO COMMISSION AND CONGRESS.**—Not later than 30 days after receipt of the Commission's recommendations, the President shall transmit to the Commission and Congress a report that sets forth the President's approval or disapproval of the Commission's recommendations.

(c) **APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL.**—If the President—

(1) approves of the Commission's recommendations, the President shall transmit a copy of the recommendations to Congress, together with a certification of such approval;

(2) disapproves of the Commission's recommendations, in whole or in part, the President shall also transmit to the Commission and Congress the reasons for such disapproval. The Commission shall then transmit to the President,

not later than 30 days following the disapproval, a revised list of recommendations;

(3) approves all of the revised recommendations of the Commission, the President shall transmit a copy or such revised recommendations to Congress, together with a certification of such approval; or

(4) does not transmit to the Congress an approval and certification described in paragraphs (1) or (3) within 30 days of receipt of the Commission's recommendations or revised recommendations, as the case may be, the process shall terminate until the following year.

#### SEC. 14. CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS.

(a) **JOINT RESOLUTION OF APPROVAL.**—If a House of Congress has not taken a vote on final passage of a joint resolution as described in subsection (c) within 45 days after the President's transmission to that House of the approved recommendations pursuant to section 13, then such vote shall be taken on the next day of session following the expiration of the 45-day period.

(b) **COMPUTATION OF TIME PERIOD.**—For the purposes of this section, the days on which either House of Congress is not in session because of adjournment of more than three days shall be excluded in the computation of the period of time.

(c) **TERMS OF THE RESOLUTION.**—For purposes of this section, the term "joint resolution" means only a joint resolution—

(1) which does not have a preamble;

(2) the matter after the resolving clause of which is as follows: "That Congress approves the recommendations of the Civilian Property Realignment Commission as submitted by the President on \_\_\_\_\_ and notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Federal agencies shall implement and carry out all of the Commission's recommendations pursuant to section 15 of the Civilian Property Realignment Act", the blank space being filled in with the appropriate date;

(3) the title of which is as follows: "Joint resolution approving the recommendations of the Civilian Property Realignment Commission"; and

(4) which is introduced pursuant to subsection (d).

(d) **INTRODUCTION.**—After a House of Congress receives the President's transmission of approved recommendations pursuant to section 13, the majority leader of that House (or a designee) shall introduce (by request, if appropriate) a joint resolution described in subsection (c)—

(1) in the case of the House of Representatives, within three legislative days; and

(2) in the case of the Senate, within three session days.

(e) **CONSIDERATION IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.**—

(1) **REFERRAL AND REPORTING.**—Any committee of the House of Representatives to which a joint resolution is referred shall report it to the House without amendment not later than the tenth legislative day after the date of its introduction. If a committee fails to report the joint resolution within that period, it shall be in order to move that the House discharge the committee from further consideration of the joint resolution. Such a motion shall be in order only at a time designated by the Speaker in the legislative schedule within three legislative days after the day on which the proponent, announces his intention to offer the motion. Notice may not be given on an anticipatory basis. Such a motion shall not be in order after the House has disposed of a motion to discharge a joint resolution. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion except twenty minutes of debate equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent. If such a motion is adopted, the House shall proceed immediately to consider the joint resolution in accordance with paragraph (3). A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is disposed of shall not be in order.

(2) **PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.**—After the last committee authorized to consider a joint resolution reports it to the House or has been discharged (other than by motion) from its consideration, it shall be in order to move to proceed to consider the joint resolution in the House. Such a motion shall be in order only at a time designated by the Speaker in the legislative schedule within three legislative days after the day on which the proponent announces his intention to offer the motion. Notice may not be given on an anticipatory basis. Such a motion shall not be in order after the House has disposed of a motion to proceed with respect to that transmittal of recommendations. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is disposed of shall not be in order.

(3) **CONSIDERATION.**—The joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against a joint resolution and against its consideration are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on a joint resolution to its passage without intervening motion except five hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent and one motion to limit debate on the joint resolution. A motion to reconsider the vote on passage of the joint resolution shall not be in order.

(4) **POST SINE DIE.**—If the House has adopted a concurrent resolution providing for adjournment sine die at the end of a Congress, a motion to discharge under paragraph (1) or a motion to proceed under subparagraph (2) shall be in order as applicable.

(f) **CONSIDERATION IN THE SENATE.**—

(g) **AMENDMENTS PROHIBITED.**—No amendment to, or motion to strike a provision from, a joint resolution considered under this section shall be in order in either the Senate or the House of Representatives.

(h) **CONSIDERATION BY OTHER HOUSE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—If, before the passage by one House of a joint resolution of that House described in subsection (c), that House received from the other House a joint resolution described in subsection (e), then the following procedures shall apply:

(A) **NO COMMITTEE REFERRAL.**—The joint resolution or the other House shall not be referred to a committee and may not be considered in the House receiving it except in the case of final passage as provided in subparagraph (B).

(B) **JOINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE.**—With respect to a joint resolution described in subsection (c) of the House receiving the joint resolution the procedure in that House shall be the same as if no joint resolution had been received from the other House, but the vote on final passage shall be on the joint resolution of the other House.

(2) **NO CONSIDERATION.**—Upon disposition of the joint resolution received from the other House, it shall no longer be in order to consider the joint resolution that originated in the receiving House.

(3) **EXCEPTION.**—This subsection shall not apply to the House of Representatives if the joint resolution received from the Senate is a revenue measure.

(i) **RULES OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE.**—This section is enacted by Congress—

(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate and House of Representatives, respectively, and as such it is deemed a part or the rules of each House, respectively, but applicable only with respect to the procedure to be followed in that House in the case of a joint resolution described in this section, and it supersedes other rules only to the extent that it is inconsistent with such rules; and

(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either House to change the rules (so far as relating to the procedure of that House) at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of that House.

#### SEC. 15. IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS.

(a) **CARRYING OUT RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Upon the enactment of a joint resolution described in section 14(c), Federal agencies shall immediately begin preparation to carry out the Commission's recommendations and shall initiate all activities no later than 2 years after the date on which the President transmits the recommendations to Congress. Federal agencies shall complete all recommended actions no later than the end of the 6-year period beginning on the date on which the President transmits the Commission's recommendations to Congress. All actions shall be economically beneficial and be cost neutral or otherwise favorable to the Government. For actions that will take longer than the 6-year period due to extenuating circumstances, each Federal agency shall notify the President and Congress as soon as the extenuating circumstance presents itself with an estimated time to complete the relevant action.

(b) **ACTIONS OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.**—In taking actions related to any Federal building or facility under this Act, Federal agencies may, pursuant to subsection (c), take all such necessary and proper actions, including—

(1) acquiring land, constructing replacement facilities, performing such other activities, and conducting advance planning and design as may be required to transfer functions from a Federal asset or property to another Federal civilian property; and

(2) reimbursing other Federal agencies for actions performed at the request of the Commission.

(c) **NECESSARY AND PROPER ACTIONS.**—When acting on a recommendation of the Commission, a Federal agency shall continue to act within their existing legal authorities, whether such authority has been delegated by the Administrator, or must work in partnership with the Administrator to carry out such actions. The Administrator may take such necessary and proper actions, including the sale, conveyance, or exchange or civilian real property, as required to implement the Commission recommendations in the time period required under subsection (a).

(d) **DISCRETION OF ADMINISTRATOR REGARDING TRANSACTIONS.**—For any transaction identified, recommended, or commenced as a result of this Act, any otherwise required legal priority given to, or requirement to enter into, a transaction to convey a Federal civilian real property for less than fair market value, for no consideration at all, or in a transaction that mandates the exclusion of other market participants, shall be at the discretion of the Administrator.

#### SEC. 16. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is authorized a one-time appropriation to carry out this Act in the following amounts:

(1) \$20,000,000 for salaries and expenses of the Commission.

(2) \$62,000,000 to be deposited into the Asset Proceeds and Space Management Fund for activities related to the implementation of the Commission recommendations.

(b) **FEDERAL BUILDINGS FUND.**—There is authorized to be appropriated from the Federal Buildings Fund established under section 592 of title 40, United States Code, for construction and acquisition activities \$0 for fiscal year 2012.

#### SEC. 17. FUNDING.

(a) **CREATION OF SALARIES AND EXPENSES ACCOUNT.**—

(1) **ESTABLISHMENT OF ACCOUNT.**—There is hereby established on the books of the Treasury an account to be known as the "Civilian Property Realignment Commission—Salaries and Expenses" account.

(2) **NECESSARY PAYMENTS.**—There shall be deposited into the account such amounts, as are provided in appropriations Acts, for those necessary payments for salaries and expenses to accomplish the administrative needs of the Commission.



(b) **CREATION OF ASSET PROCEEDS AND SPACE MANAGEMENT FUND.**—There is hereby established within the Federal Buildings Fund established under section 592 of title 40, United States Code, an account to be known as the “Civilian Property Realignment Commission—Asset Proceeds and Space Management Fund” which shall be used solely for the purposes of carrying out actions pursuant to the Commission recommendations approved under section 14. Notwithstanding section 3307 of title 40, United States Code, the following amounts shall be deposited into the account and made available for obligation or expenditure only as provided in advance in appropriations Acts for the purposes specified:

(1) Such amounts as are provided in appropriations Acts, to remain available until expended, for the consolidation, co-location, exchange, redevelopment, re-configuration of space, disposal, and other actions recommended by the Commission for Federal agencies.

(2) Amounts received from the sale of any civilian real property action taken pursuant to a recommendation or the Commission under section 15. As provided in appropriations Acts, such proceeds may be made available to cover necessary costs associated with implementing the recommendations pursuant to section 15, including costs associated with—

(A) sales transactions;

(B) acquiring land, construction, constructing replacement facilities, conducting advance planning and design as may be required to transfer functions from a Federal asset or property to another Federal civilian property;

(C) co-location, redevelopment, disposal, and reconfiguration of space; and

(D) other actions recommended by the Commission for Federal agencies.

(c) **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR BUDGET CONTENTS.**—The President’s budget submitted pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, shall include an estimate of proceeds that are the result of the Commission’s recommendations and the obligations and expenditures needed to support such recommendations.

#### SEC. 18. DISPOSAL OF REAL PROPERTIES.

(a) **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS.**—

(1) **APPLICABILITY OF OTHER LAW.**—Public Law 91–190, as amended, shall not apply to activities under section 11 of this Act.

(2) **CIVIL ACTION.**—A civil action for judicial review, with respect to any requirement of Public Law 91–190, as amended, to the extent such public law is applicable to the actions under section 15 of this Act, of any act or failure to act by a Federal agency during the closing, realigning, or relocating of functions under this Act, may not be brought more than 60 days after the date of such act or failure to act.

(3) **TRANSFER OF REAL PROPERTY.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—When implementing the recommended actions pursuant to section 15 for properties that have been identified in the Commission’s recommendations and in compliance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.), including section 120(h) thereof (42 U.S.C. 9620(h)), Federal agencies may enter into an agreement to transfer by deed real property with any person.

(B) **ADDITIONAL TERMS.**—The head of the disposing agency may require any additional terms and conditions in connection with an agreement authorized by subparagraph (A) as the head of the disposing agency considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States. Such additional terms and conditions shall not affect or diminish any rights or obligations of the Federal agencies under CERCLA section 120(h) (including, without limitation, the requirements CERCLA section 120(h)(3)(A) and CERCLA section 120(h)(3)(C)(iv)).

(4) **INFORMATION DISCLOSURE.**—As part, of an agreement pursuant to this Act, the agency

shall disclose to the person to whom the property or facilities will be transferred any information of the Federal agency regarding the environmental restoration, waste management, and environmental compliance activities described in this Act that relate to the property or facilities. The agency shall provide such information before entering into the agreement.

(b) **CONSTRUCTION OF CERTAIN ACTS.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to modify, alter, or amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.) or the Solid Waste Disposal Act (42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.).

#### SEC. 19. CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF PROPOSED PROJECTS.

Section 3307(b) of title 40, United States Code is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (6);

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (7) and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following: “(8) a statement of how the proposed project is consistent with section 11(b) of the Civilian Property Realignment Act.”.

#### SEC. 20. LIMITATION OF CERTAIN LEASING AUTHORITIES.

(a) **LIMITATION OF CERTAIN LEASING AUTHORITIES.**—Chapter 33 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§3317. Limitation on leasing authority of other agencies

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no executive agency may lease space for the purposes of a public building as defined under section 3301, except as provided under section 585, and the provisions in this chapter.

“(b) **Public Building.**—For the purposes of this section, the term ‘public building’ shall include leased space.

“(c) **FURTHER EXCLUSIONS.**—This section shall not apply to—

“(1) properties that are excluded for reasons of national security by the President; and

“(2) properties of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

“(d) **CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed as creating new authority for executive agencies to enter into leases or limit the authority of the Administration under section 3314.”.

(b) **SMALL BUSINESSES.**—When using commercial leasing services, the Administrator shall adhere to the requirements of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. et seq.).

(c) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The analysis for such chapter is amended by adding at the end: “3317. Limitation on leasing authority of other agencies.”.

#### SEC. 21. IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW BY GAO.

Upon transmittal of the Commission’s recommendations from the President to the Congress under section 13, the Comptroller General of the United States at least annually shall monitor, review the implementation activities of Federal agencies pursuant to section 15, and report to Congress any findings and recommendations.

The CHAIR. No further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in House Report 112–385. Each such further amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

The Chair understands amendment No. 1 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. DENHAM

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 112–385.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, am I to understand that the amendment before mine is not being brought up?

The CHAIR. The gentleman is correct.

Does the gentleman have an amendment at the desk?

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

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 28, after line 15, insert the following: (e) **McKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT REVIEW.**—Upon the enactment of a joint resolution described in section 14(c) and for not more than 90 days after such enactment, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall apply section 501 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11411) to the extent practicable, to any buildings identified for disposal in the approved recommendations that are not more than 25,000 square feet or valued at less than \$5,000,000.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 537, the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, this amendment reflects what was agreed to by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia on the homeless issue. The amendment ensures that there is a reasonable review of properties for use by the homeless.

Under current law, the review process is covered by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This amendment applies that law in a streamlined way to the civilian property realignment process created in H.R. 1734.

□ 1950

The streamlined review process would set a clear timeframe and apply to the types of properties normally used for the homeless, those less than 25,000 square feet or not more than \$5 million in value.

Over the 25 years since McKinney-Vento was enacted, 82 properties have been conveyed for homeless use. In 25 years, just 82 properties have been conveyed, and we want to continue to extend that, seeing as there may be other opportunities.

Typically, these are small properties used for shelters and similar types of assistance. The larger properties tend to be warehouses for food banks. Given this, the amendment provides two triggers, one based on size, and another on value to ensure properties that may be appropriate are considered for homeless use.

This is a reasonable compromise to this issue. I worked closely with the ranking member of our subcommittee, and on Friday we had agreed to this solution. Despite reversing her decision, I’ll move forward on the agreed-upon language.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. CONNOLLY OF VIRGINIA

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 112-385.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 28, line 15, insert after "the Administrator." the following: "The Administrator may also exclude property from any such transaction that the Administrator has determined is suitable for assignment to the Secretary of the Interior for transfer to a State, a political subdivision or instrumentality of a State, or a municipality for use as a public park or recreation area under section 550(e) of title 40, United States Code. In making such determination, the Administrator may consider the appraised value of the property and the highest and best use."

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 537, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Both the Transportation and Infrastructure and the Oversight and Government Reform committees have marked up legislation to save money through the disposal of Federal property. We've identified bipartisan common ground on the subject in the past. I hope we can continue to do so with this bill.

In the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, Members and the staff have worked on a bipartisan basis to report legislation expediting the disposal of real Federal property. The bill we reported unanimously included, by voice vote, my amendment to protect the ability of local governments to work with the Federal Government on real property disposal. The amendment before us today includes identical language to protect local planning prerogatives and to ensure that Federal decisions take cognizance of local circumstances. I reiterate, an amendment that had Republican support on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

I introduced this amendment because I have direct experience with successful real property disposal in my northern Virginia district. My predecessor, Republican Tom Davis of Virginia, worked with me and my colleagues in local government and with the GSA to sell the former Lorton prison site, which was under Federal control, to Fairfax County, Virginia.

The land transfer saved the Federal Government the cost of maintaining

over 330 structures on the property and many historic buildings. In collaboration with the community, we created a new park with cultural and recreational attractions, and the project set off a development boom in the southern part of our community.

In short, this land transfer was a win/win for the Federal Government, for the local government. Both benefited from the sale, and local residents who lacked adequate park land, and a win for the private sector which capitalized on residential and commercial redevelopment opportunities as a result.

Other communities across America ought to also be able to work with the Federal Government on mutually beneficial land disposal processes like those that turned Lorton prison into a vibrant new community in my county.

Mr. DENHAM and the T&I Committee have judiciously included stipulations that the BRAC-type commission for property disposal include individuals with historic preservation and community development expertise, and I appreciate that. However, these individuals cannot possibly know about the individual local circumstances in communities all across America.

For that expertise, we must return to the conservative principle that local people, not the Federal Government, know the most about their own local circumstances. To that end, my simple amendment would protect the ability of local governments to work with GSA to dispose of real property which would be suitable for park land.

This amendment would not interfere with the author's objective of liquidating high-value Federal buildings, nor would it compromise the BRAC-type commission. It simply would give local governments and local taxpayers a voice in the disposal of property in their back yards, if that property is suitable for park land.

As we learned in Oversight and Government Reform hearings on this topic, my amendment would save the Federal Government money because it would eliminate Federal maintenance expenses; and we know that maintenance costs represent the largest and most achievable cost-savings opportunity in real-property disposal.

In summary, this amendment is based on local success we realized working with Congress, both Tom Davis and JIM MORAN, to preserve park land and save money for the Federal Government. Similar language was adopted unanimously in the Oversight and Government Reform Committee recently when we marked up similar legislation to H.R. 1734. It would protect local governments' and local citizens' roles in the land-disposal process, based on the conservative principle the Federal Government doesn't always know best.

I appreciate the time the T&I Committee staff took to try to work with us on this amendment. I also appreciate the support for this language from Democratic and Republican mem-

bers of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee during our markup, and I urge our colleagues to support the amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 1734 is drafted to ensure there is a streamlined process to sell or redevelop high-value assets.

H.R. 1734 preserves our parks and open spaces by explicitly exempting them from the process outlined in the bill. Despite this, the amendment by the gentleman from Virginia would give the General Services Administration extraordinary authority to take valuable properties off the table and set them aside. This amendment would give GSA veto authority over the President, over Congress by allowing GSA to remove properties after recommendations are approved.

The legislation includes opportunities for State and local governments to receive properties in the process, and the commission will include expertise in community development. Those considerations would be included in the recommendations submitted to the President and Congress.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I heard the eloquent cry for bipartisanship from the gentleman from California just a few minutes ago. Here's an amendment that passed unanimously, without objection on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. It, by no means, grants the kind of authority just described to GSA. It is a simple protection for local governments to get in the process.

I regret very much that the fix is in, that we're not going to have bipartisan amendments adopted tonight to this bill, and little wonder then that your bill will have no support on this side of the aisle.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE OF TEXAS

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 112-385.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 35, after line 14, insert the following:  
**SEC. 22. SENSE OF CONGRESS AND REPORTS.**

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Civilian Property Realignment Commission, should take steps to provide assistance to small, minority, and woman-owned businesses seeking to be awarded contracts to redevelop federal property;

(2) the Civilian Property Realignment Commission and other appropriate Federal officials should conduct a public information campaign to advise small, minority, and women-owned business firms with respect to contracts for the sale or redevelopment of Federal property; and

(3) firms that are awarded contracts pertaining to the redevelopment of Federal property should, to the maximum extent practicable, seek to award subcontracts for such contracts to small, minority, and women-owned business firms.

(b) PROGRESS REPORTS.—Every 6 months, the Civilian Property Realignment Commission shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress and the President, a report regarding contracting. Each such report shall indicate, as of the date of the submission of such report, the size of all business firms awarded contracts by the Commission and the size of all business firms awarded subcontracts under such contracts

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 537, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As I understand this legislation, it is to establish a commission that deals with the civilian property realignment for this Nation. Some 340 million-plus square feet, I understand, is within the jurisdiction of the General Services Administration.

I want to acknowledge the leadership of the ranking member on many issues dealing with property around the Nation. Thank her for that leadership.

My amendment is a simple amendment that expresses that the commission, or other appropriate Federal agencies, should conduct a public-information campaign to advise small, minority, women-owned businesses of the available contracts under this particular commission and report to Congress.

□ 2000

Just this morning, before I flew to Washington, I had a room full of small, minority, and women-owned businesses clamoring to understand how to interact with the Federal Government. In fact, one particular women-owned business stood up and said that they had been certified for however long and never could get any information on how to access opportunities that could be utilized by their small business to create jobs.

This amendment is a sense of Congress that provides a public awareness

campaign that would help to ensure that a broad swath of the small business community is reached. It is imperative that these businesses are aware of the existence of contracts. It is also imperative that the process for obtaining a Government contract is clear, which is why it is extremely important that the commission, along with other appropriate Federal agencies, implement an awareness campaign targeting small, minority, and women-owned businesses.

I further believe there should be accountability as to which firms are receiving these lucrative contracts, and a system of monitoring. Everyone has said on the floor of the House—bipartisan, Republicans and Democrats—we are for small businesses. So am I. I want them thriving, growing, surviving, and getting the information to do business with this huge Federal Government.

This amendment, which is a sense of Congress, I believe gives them an opportunity to play on an equal playing field.

We know what will happen with a commission: that those who have always known how to access the system will be at the front of the line. Let's give these small companies an opportunity to also achieve their dreams and aspiration for the American Dream.

I ask my colleagues to support this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Chair, I rise to debate H.R. 1734, the "Civilian Property Realignment Act." I offered an amendment to this measure which acknowledges the challenges faced by small, minority, and women-owned businesses that participate in the government contracting process. However, I have several reservations about this bill. The failure to include language that would require an environmental impact analysis of these properties does not make sense.

The original bill waived Title V of the McKinney-Vento Act, which provides for the free transfer of surplus federal properties to homeless providers, as well as, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Homeless providers have claimed less than 1 percent of the thousands of properties available to them because of the size of the properties. I was led to believe that an agreement had been reached to ensure that a provision that applied the McKinney-Vento requirements to properties of a certain size and value would be in this bill, it is unclear whether that will be the case.

In addition, the bill contains a second poisonous pill, as it waives the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which requires a thorough public examination of the environmental impacts of a project or property transfer, to avoid an unintended adverse effect on a surrounding community and a harmful precedent of waiving appropriate environmental review on major infrastructure projects.

Many of these properties are decades old. These buildings may contain asbestos among other issues that may have a direct impact on those who renovate them, as well as, the surrounding communities in which they are located. Allowing those communities to express their concerns through a public comment pe-

riod is reasonable. In addition, ensuring that the federal government does all that it can to remediate its own property prior to transfer or renovation is an example to all other sectors of the importance of adhering to environmental safety standards. If these concerns can be addressed this bill serves as a reasonable vehicle to help combat the deficit. If these concerns cannot be address this bill may be fatally flawed.

Would require federal agencies to compile environmental information about all property being considered for action and provide for a limited review of property by homeless service providers.

President Obama, first proposed this bipartisan measure in his budget last year as a means to decrease unnecessary government spending and reduce the deficit. It is my hope that the issues that have been raised can be addressed before we must vote on this measure.

H.R. 1734 establishes the Civilian Property Realignment Commission (CPRC) to better manage federal buildings and facilities. This measure would give the Commission broad new authorities to consolidate, dispose of, or sell some government properties. In addition, the Commission is required to sell at least five facilities that have a combined estimated fair market value of at least \$500 million.

I believe that if this legislation passes that the newly formed Civilian Property Realignment Commission (CPRC) should take steps to educate and assist small, women, and minority-owned businesses when awarding contracts related to the sale or redevelopment of federal property. However the bill does not address concerns raised related to the impact on the homeless and it removes a provision that requires an environmental impact study before the transfer of any federal land. These studies are a tool to determine the land, air, and water quality of the property being transferred and the intended use of said property. I believe that it is not in the best interest of the government or local communities to remove this vital safety feature.

H.R. 1734 is similar to the Department of Defense Base Realignment Commission (BRAC) law, which allows the federal government to make the best use of surplus and underused properties under the jurisdiction of various federal agencies, and to dispose of properties the government does not need to help with debt reduction.

It is important to remember that the federal government owns a significant amount of property. The role of the CPRC is to present an accurate view of how that property is currently utilized and consolidate certain activities. For example, currently 30 different agencies have 30 different leasing methods; the CPRC would streamline the process by taking over leasing authority.

The General Services Administration (GSA) one of the largest real estate organizations in the world, with an inventory consisting of 8,920 assets with over 342 million square feet of rentable space across all 50 states, 6 U.S. Territories, and the District of Columbia. They serve approximately 1 million Federal employees at 59 different agencies. The GSA has a portfolio which consists primarily of office buildings, courthouses, laboratories, border stations, and warehouses.

GSA's current inventory consists of 8,932 assets totaling 387,841,174 gross square feet

(gsf) nationwide. When these assets are separated between leased and owned, the portfolio consists of 1,884 owned assets totaling 218,983,699 gsf and 7,048 leased assets representing 168,857,475 gsf. The annual operating costs for FY2005 were \$1.5 billion, \$800 million for government owned and \$650 million for leased locations. The replacement value of the owned inventory is \$37.2 billion.

They have reduced the percentage of underutilized and non-performing assets from 42 percent to 26 percent;

Reduced vacant space from 9.2 percent to 6.8 percent, significantly below the 2005 industry average rate of 12.5 percent; and,

Reported excess 204 assets and demolished 50 buildings and, as a result, eliminated 3.1 million rentable square feet of vacant space and achieved a cost avoidance of \$400 million in capital reinvestment needs.

As of October 1, 2002, federal agencies reported a total of 927 vacant and underutilized real properties—including facilities and land—located throughout the United States and Puerto Rico in 294 cities.

The Veteran's Administration (VA) reported the most properties—577;

General Service Administration (GSA) reported 236 properties, and United States Postal Service (USPS) reported 114 properties.

Most of these properties—807 of 927—were facilities that represented about 32.1 million square feet and ranged from office buildings to hospitals to post offices.

Although VA reported the highest number of facilities, GSA facilities made up more than half of this square footage. The remaining 120 properties were vacant lands reported only by VA and USPS, most of which were 10 acres or less.

One-third or 125 of GSA's underutilized and unutilized assets have been reported excess and accepted for disposal. These assets account for almost 9 million gross square feet (gsf) and \$10.9 million in operating expenses that will be eliminated upon completion of the disposal action. Another 18 underutilized assets with approximately 1 million gross square feet (gsf) and \$1.5 million in operating costs are projected for disposal in the next five years pending customer relocation.

There were 89 leased facilities that were determined to be underutilized with operating costs totaling \$6.2 million in FY2005. GSA eliminates vacant leased space by backfilling space with other customers, terminating the lease or vacant portion thereof or buying out the remaining lease term whenever possible. At the end of FY2005, GSA's leased vacancy rate was at a record low level (below 1.5%).

With an aging inventory it is imperative that we reinvest in our federal facilities to maintain a quality workplace for our federal agencies. At any given time a significant portion of our vacant space is under renovation.

As of September 30, 2005, GSA had 21 assets vacated for major renovations accounting for almost 9 million gross square feet and \$39.6 million in operating expenses. As the current projects are completed, the space will be backfilled and these assets will once again become utilized.

At the same time, new projects will begin in different assets keeping the amount of assets that are underutilized due to major renovations fairly constant.

The Civilian Property Realignment Commission (CPRC) will review all federal properties

and leases utilized for civilian use to determine an accurate number of properties that are either vacant or underutilized.

The independent Commission (CPRC), operating under the GSA, will transform how federal real estate is managed. The purpose of the Commission will be to convert real estate inefficiencies into reductions in the Federal deficit. By facilitating and expediting the sale and disposal of unneeded properties; reducing our reliance on costly leased space; and sell or redevelop high value assets that are underutilized.

I firmly believe this Commission should consider the impact of their decisions on the small business community. Specifically, small, minority, and women-owned businesses which face many challenges when trying to learn about the existence of government contracts for which they can apply, as well as, maneuvering through the complex government contracting process.

As the decisions of the Commission will impact local communities, revitalize neighborhoods, decrease government spending, and reduce the deficit. The Commission should recognize the important role that small businesses play in our economy.

My amendment simply expresses that the Commission or other appropriate federal agency should conduct a public information campaign to advise small, minority, women-owned businesses of the available contracts.

In order to ensure that a broad swath of the small business community is reached it is imperative that these businesses are aware of the existence of contracts. It is also imperative that the process for attaining a government contract is clear; which is why it is extremely important that the Commission, along with all other appropriate federal agencies, implement an awareness campaign targeting small, minority, and women-owned businesses.

The only way to ensure a diverse representation of businesses is through targeted awareness campaigns followed by a clear process, along with adequate support.

Further, I believe there should be accountability as to which firms are receiving these lucrative contracts. The Commission should report to Congress and the President every 6 months. This report should include the amount of contracts awarded to business firms. The report should also include small, minority, and women-owned businesses, as well as, sub-contracts awarded to these businesses.

Few would argue with the premise that small business is the backbone of our economy and the heartbeat of our nation. The small business owner reflects a valued principle in our nation's heritage. The belief that an individual or a group of individuals can come together to build a business from the ground up then employ their neighbors.

#### SMALL BUSINESS

In government contracting it is important to ensure that everyone has equal access to this valued American dream. Every small business should have a fair chance to have an equal opportunity to attain a government contract that will impact their communities.

Ninety-nine percent of all independent companies and businesses in the United States are considered small businesses.

Small businesses are the engine of our economy, creating two-thirds of the new jobs over the last 15 years. Enabling small businesses to gain access to these contracts

would result in job growth in areas that were previously underutilized by the federal government.

Small businesses have always been a source of dynamism for the American economy.

In 2009, there were 27.5 million businesses in the United States. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) these small enterprises account for 52 percent of all U.S. workers.

Some 19.6 million Americans work for companies employing fewer than 20 workers, 18.4 million work for firms employing between 20 and 99 workers, and 14.6 million work for firms with 100 to 499 workers. By contrast, 47.7 million Americans work for firms with 500 or more employees.

#### MILITARY MUSEUM OF TEXAS

As a Senior Member on the House Homeland Security Committee, I have been one of the foremost proponents of finding ways to transform federal property from vacant space into property that can serve the community.

I introduced legislation that was signed into law that allowed the Military Museum of Texas to purchase land from the GSA. I realize the negative impact underutilized and vacant properties have on local communities. To be frank, if a property is not properly tended to it becomes blight upon the community and a needless expense for taxpayers.

The land upon which the Military Museum of Texas is located, 8611 Wallisville Road, Houston, Texas, was property of the General Services Administration. A bill I introduced last Congress, H.R. 6510, directed the General Services Administration (GSA) to convey at market value all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to over three acres of property located at 8611 Wallisville Road, in Houston, Texas to the Military Museum of Texas.

The conveyance was based upon an independent appraisal and any other costs associated will be paid for by the Military Museum.

The passage of H.R. 6510, allowed the Military Museum of Texas to remain at its current location in Houston, Texas and purchase the 3.6 acres from the General Services Administration that was previously vacant. In order for the GSA to sell this piece of land which was not being utilized required an Act of Congress.

With the establishment of the Civilian Realignment Commission it is my belief that more opportunities to revitalize communities, like the one afforded the Military Museum of Texas, can be found. These opportunities will benefit both businesses and the communities within which they are located.

The Military Museum of Texas was formed to create, maintain and operate an institution to honor and perpetuate the memories of all men and women who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America. The President of the Military Museum of Texas, Ed Farris, a former Marine sergeant, and a 22-year veteran of the Houston Police Department's motorcycle patrol and bomb squad, worked tirelessly to preserve the memories of the men and women of the armed forces.

The Military Museum is a pillar in the community, and a benefit to schools, veterans and military related groups. It provides educational programs, live reenactments from military personnel as well as interactive exhibits. Furthermore, the Military Museum provides internships in military history and preservation, and

a research database available for education and historical institutions and the public. Instead of land being left vacant it can now be used by the community.

Clearly there are many vital and important provisions in this bill; however, I still have grave reservations about the repeal of an environmental impact study before the transference of any federal land.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, we have no objection to the amendment.

The CHAIR. Does any Member claim time in opposition?

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Chair, let me just say that the evidence of how important this language is is by way of a group in Texas that was able to secure by legislation—with the gentelady from the District of Columbia's excellent assistance—a military museum that was held by the General Services Administration. This group of veterans is making it a productive site and a productive part of our local community that evidences what we can secure with this language.

Again, I ask my colleagues to support this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE). The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIR. The Chair understands that amendment No. 5 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. CARNAHAN

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in House Report 112-385.

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

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following new sections:

**SEC. 22. CONSIDERATION OF LIFE-CYCLE COST REQUIRED.**

Section 3305 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d) CONSIDERATION OF LIFE-CYCLE COST REQUIRED.—

“(1) REQUIREMENT.—The Administrator shall ensure that the life-cycle cost of a public building is considered in the construction or lease of a public building described in paragraph (2).

“(2) FEDERAL BUILDINGS SUBJECT TO REQUIREMENT.—A public building is subject to the requirement under paragraph (1) if—

“(A) construction or lease of the building begins after the date of the enactment of the Civilian Property Realignment Act;

“(B) the estimated construction costs of the building exceed \$1,000,000;

“(C) in the case of a lease, the square footage of the property is more than 25,000 square feet; and

“(D) Federal funding comprises more than 50 percent of the funding for the estimated construction or lease costs of the building.

“(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection, the following definitions apply:

“(A) LIFE-CYCLE COST.—The term ‘life-cycle cost’ means the sum of the following costs, as estimated for the lifetime of a building:

“(i) Investment costs.

“(ii) Capital costs.

“(iii) Installation costs.

“(iv) Energy costs.

“(v) Operating costs.

“(vi) Maintenance costs.

“(vii) Replacement costs.

“(B) LIFETIME OF A BUILDING.—The term ‘lifetime of a building’ means, with respect to a building, the greater of—

“(i) the period of time during which the building is projected to be utilized; or

“(ii) 50 years.”.

**SEC. 23. LONG-TERM SAVINGS THROUGH LIFE-CYCLE COST ANALYSIS.**

Section 3307(b) of title 40, United States Code, as amended by section 19, is further amended—

(1) in paragraph (7), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (8), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(9) with respect to any prospectus for the construction, alteration, or acquisition of any building or space to be leased, a statement by the Administrator describing the use of life-cycle cost analysis and any increased design, construction, or acquisition costs identified by such analysis that are offset by lower long-term costs.”.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 537, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CARNAHAN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I also want to add my voice to encouraging our chairman and ranking member to continue to work together to find that common ground. I know they have worked on this, but there obviously is more work to be done, and I want to encourage that. It is the only way we are going to get things done in this House.

I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member for their work on the committee and on this bill. I also want to thank the bipartisan High-Performance Building Caucus that I've worked with over the last several years that has helped bring focus on more efficient management and technology for our built environment.

The amendment that I offer here tonight will ensure that the Federal Government makes better decisions in the construction or leasing of Federal facilities, decisions that save taxpayer dollars. The U.S. Federal Government manages a large inventory of approximately 429,000 buildings, with a total square footage of 3.34 billion worldwide.

As we know, buildings are resource intensive, accounting for 40 percent of primary energy use in the U.S., 12 percent of water consumption, and 60 percent of nonindustrial waste. Federal facilities account for 0.4 percent of the Nation's energy usage. With such a large energy footprint and related costs, it is only common sense that the Federal Government fully understand both the short- and long-term cost of the construction and lease for a facility.

My amendment ensures that future construction and leased projects reflect

the best use of Federal dollars and the greatest value for taxpayers. My amendment does this by requiring the use of life-cycle cost analysis in the design or lease of a Federal building where the project is receiving at least 50 percent Federal funding. Life-cycle cost analysis is the most accurate method for assessing the total cost of facility ownership. It takes into account all costs of acquiring, owning, and disposing of a building or building system. It is a whole picture assessment of a project instead of only looking at the immediate upfront costs.

This would provide valuable insight into the real long-term costs of a facility and encourage the construction or lease of the facilities that provide the best results for the lowest overall cost.

The process of life-cycle analysis makes for sound fiscal policy and increases transparency and accountability while allowing our building planners to account for the full long-term costs of projects.

Life-cycle budgeting ensures that we make the best decisions and get the most value when it comes to our infrastructure. We know that it can be marginally more expensive to construct an energy efficient facility, but over the long term, the same facility saves money in energy and water costs that actually make the building a better investment.

My amendment will ensure that Federal agencies have a complete picture and understand ongoing budgetary obligations when considering construction or leasing of a facility. Agencies should use this tool to consider the total cost of ownership of their buildings, including long-term operating life-cycle costs.

This amendment requires Federal agencies to use life-cycle cost analysis of the overall spending on design, construction, operation, and maintenance to reflect the best use of agency funds.

I thank my colleagues for recognizing the importance of this issue, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, I would like to claim the time in opposition even though I'm not opposed to the amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the gentleman from Missouri for his work on this amendment. Just as we saw the other Democratic amendment pass through on a voice vote, I assume we're going to see this one pass through on a voice vote as well, making both amendments actually language in the bill.

That could've been done a couple of other times tonight. We want to make sure we have got a bipartisan bill, that both parties can agree that we want to get rid of waste, that we want to get rid of properties we just don't need, and that we actually run a more efficient government.

But specifically on this amendment, again I'd like to thank the gentleman from Missouri for his work on this. This amendment would ensure that the General Services Administration accounts for the total cost in the design or lease of a building.

Very often GSA makes decisions that bind the taxpayer to significant financial obligations when procuring space. And unfortunately, currently GSA's analyses do not take into account the total life-cycle cost of the taxpayer investment. This amendment would correct this. I support the adoption of this amendment as I've supported other adoptions tonight.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DENHAM. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise in support of Mr. CARNAHAN's amendment, and he ran out of time. First of all, I see a lot of comity and collegiality on the floor tonight. I've known the gentlelady from the District of Columbia for a very long time. Mr. CARNAHAN said something that struck my conscience, and that is that we are able to master this legislative process that allows us to negotiate to the moment that we might get this on the floor, which I understand may be tomorrow.

I would encourage whatever it is possible to do, Mr. DENHAM. I've gotten to know you—whatever is possible for a bill as important as this. You mentioned the possibility of language, reconciliation. I cannot speak for the gentlelady from the District of Columbia, and I don't intend to do so. But I do know her as a person who keeps her word, who loves this Capitol, which she represents, and has a deep and abiding concern about the homeless and obviously this issue of the use of property.

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I only entreat you to see what is possible as you have debated on the floor this evening for Mr. CARNAHAN and my amendment. I would encourage that there be further discussions if you and the gentlelady can secure that opportunity. I think both would be able to hopefully have dialogue, but I do want to have on record my high esteem and respect for her leadership on these issues. You are very kind to have yielded to me.

Mr. DENHAM. In reclaiming my time, I support the amendment, and look forward to bipartisan support on the bill tomorrow morning. This is something that taxpayers need. This is something that will help us to reduce our debt in a way in which Republicans and Democrats can come together and work on something on a bipartisan level and actually give something back to the President that he is asking for.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Missouri has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I want to thank the gentleman for his remarks.

The ranking member has asked to speak for the remaining time, so I would yield that 1 minute to our ranking member, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I support the Carnahan amendment, and I just want to indicate what the agreement was with the chairman.

In the base bill, we would have a bill that Democrats and Republicans would support. What we have here is a bill that somehow Republicans are divided on and that Democrats are expected to somehow carry over the finish line. If, in fact, this bill had come as a base bill, I think you would have had Democrats in larger numbers supporting this bill. Whatever Republicans wanted to do with the fact that the base bill did not always conform exactly to what they would have wanted would have been made up for on our side.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CARNAHAN).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. DENHAM. 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. AMODEI) having assumed the chair, Mr. WOODALL, 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. 1734) to decrease the deficit by realigning, consolidating, selling, disposing, and improving the efficiency of federal buildings and other civilian real property, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

#### CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS: VOTER PROTECTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This evening, the Congressional Black Caucus is pleased to have a few minutes of Special Order time to again come back to the issue of voter protection.

As we know, many States have either passed laws restricting voter participation in elections or are in the process of doing so. These attacks, as we said last week, have taken many forms. They've been expanding the ban that prevents felons from voting, cutting election administration budgets, curtailing early voting, and eliminating same-day registration.

Just in November, two members of the Congressional Black Caucus, KEITH ELLISON and GWEN MOORE, introduced a bill, the Voter Access Protection Act, which would protect those rights and restore same-day voter registration. The bill would reverse both the laws

that curtail early voting and that eliminate same-day registration. Some of these laws allow for the intimidation of voter registration groups. Some States are imposing strict ID requirements, creating barriers in getting the required ID and also putting up barriers to students who vote where they attend school.

Tonight, I am going to be joined by several Members, beginning with Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE from Texas, to again begin to raise the country's awareness of some of the voting restrictions that are being put in place across this country and to let the public know that the Congressional Black Caucus, just as we did last year, will go across the country to raise awareness of the need for jobs. We will have job fairs from which we have actually put people to work in several cities across this country. We've matched people who were out of work with jobs. We're still waiting for this Congress to pass jobs legislation, the American Jobs Act, and many of the other pieces of legislation that the CBC and other Members have put forth, but this time we're going to go across the country and focus on protecting the right of Americans to vote.

At this time, I would yield such time as she might consume to Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE of Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Let me thank Congresswoman CHRISTENSEN for her leadership as well as thank our chairman, EMANUEL CLEAVER. We had the opportunity to host him in Houston this past weekend, and he raised the issue of the challenges of voter protection.

I see that we are joined by our colleague from Ohio. MARCY KAPTUR has been a champion on these issues as well, and, frankly, has seen her State be in the crosshairs of trying to protect all citizens' right to vote.

I just want to follow up and say the Voting Rights Act is an act that dignifies all voters because its premise is one person, one vote. The tenets and the premise of the Voting Rights Act as passed: No matter what your background in this Nation, you have an opportunity to vote. If we keep with the integrity of the Voting Rights Act, the gist of its message is don't block individuals from voting. That's simply what its message is.

This is more than appropriate for which to rise to the floor today because this is the month of the birth of Barbara Jordan, February 21. Last year was her 75th year, and we're still commemorating it in Houston. She was, again, part mother of the Voting Rights Act by adding language minorities. By doing that, she spread the coverage of the Voting Rights Act beyond the Deep South, which was the original core group of States that was signed into law in 1965.

So I say thank you to the Honorable Barbara Jordan, one of our colleagues and a member of the Congressional Black Caucus. I stand here today to reject any undermining of the legislative