

the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4158.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CUTTING FEDERAL UNNECESSARY AND EXPENSIVE LEASING ACT OF 2012

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6324) to reduce the number of nonessential vehicles purchased and leased by the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6324

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 “Cutting Federal Unnecessary and Expensive Leasing Act of 2012” or the “Cutting FUEL Act”.

SEC. 2. REDUCTION OF THE NUMBER OF NON-ESSENTIAL VEHICLES PURCHASED AND LEASED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

(a) REVIEW OF NONESSENTIAL VEHICLE PURCHASE.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the head of the relevant Executive agency, shall complete each of the following:

(1) Determine the total dollar amount obligated by each Executive agency to purchase civilian vehicles in fiscal year 2010.

(2) Determine the total dollar amount obligated by each Executive agency to lease civilian vehicles in fiscal year 2010.

(3) Determine the total number of civilian vehicles purchased by each Executive agency in fiscal year 2010.

(4) Determine the total number of civilian vehicles leased by each Executive agency in fiscal year 2010.

(5) Determine the total dollar amount that would be 20 percent less than the dollar amount determined under paragraphs (1) and (2) for each Executive agency.

(b) REDUCTION OF NONESSENTIAL VEHICLE PURCHASE.—For each of fiscal years 2013 through 2017, each Executive agency may not obligate more than the dollar amount identified pursuant to subsection (a)(5) to purchase and lease civilian vehicles.

(c) SHARING.—The Administrator of General Services shall ensure that an Executive agency may share excess or unused vehicles with another Executive agency that may need temporary or long-term use of additional vehicles through the Federal Fleet Management System.

(d) NATIONAL SECURITY EXCEPTION.—The limits on the purchase and procurement of vehicles provided in this section shall not apply to the purchase or procurement of any vehicle that has been determined by the President to be essential for reasons of national security.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CIVILIAN VEHICLE.—The term “civilian vehicle” means a vehicle that is not used for purposes of military combat, the training or deployment of uniformed military personnel, or such other uses as determined by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Administrator of General Services.

(2) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term “Executive agency” has the meaning given that term under section 105 of title 5, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 6324, the Cutting Federal Unnecessary and Expensive Leasing Act, or Cutting FUEL Act, of 2012 is a bipartisan piece of legislation introduced by Mr. HANNA of New York and Mr. BARROW of Georgia.

With a \$16 trillion debt, Congress and the Federal Government need to spend taxpayer dollars more efficiently and help reduce costs. Federal agencies currently own or lease roughly 660,000 cars, vans, sport utility vehicles, trucks, buses, and ambulances; and I'm sure there are a host of other items as well. During fiscal year 2011, the Federal Government spent roughly \$4.4 billion to maintain and operate these vehicles, including \$1.3 billion in fuel costs alone. During the last 5 years, Federal agencies purchased an average of approximately 68,000 new vehicles annually at a cost of roughly \$1.5 billion per year.

The Bowles-Simpson National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform recommended reducing the number of nonessential vehicles owned or leased by Federal agencies, other than the Department of Defense or the postal service, by 20 percent. According to some estimates, this proposal could save up to \$500 million over the next 10 years.

The Cutting FUEL Act would reduce the government's spending on civilian vehicle purchases and leases by 20 percent and would maintain that reduced level of spending for 5 years. This reduction would not apply to military or postal vehicles, and there is an exception provided for national security vehicles as well.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is a good, commonsense piece of legislation, and we want to encourage Members to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in opposition to H.R. 6324, the Cutting FUEL Act. This bill is being rushed to the floor without any hearings or considerations by the Oversight

and Government Reform Committee. The result is a poorly drafted bill that may have harmful, unintended consequences. This bill would require all Federal agencies to reduce their purchases and leases of vehicles by 20 percent, below 2010 expenditure levels. This reduction would not apply to military vehicles, and an exception is provided for vehicles necessary for national security purposes.

While my colleagues' goal is to cut government spending and force agencies to spend their money more efficiently, this bill is not the way to achieve those objectives. This bill does not take into account agencies that have already decreased their fleet sizes by improving fleet management procedures. According to a recent GAO report, agencies such as the Air Force have implemented various fleet downsizing policies and have made efforts to eliminate vehicles that are not mission critical. Instead of examining the needs of each individual agency, this bill simply makes a sweeping 20 percent cut applicable to all agencies regardless of whether they have already made significant improvements.

□ 1610

The GAO also noted that some agencies, like the Department of Veterans Affairs, have increased their fleet sizes due to expanded programs essential to assisting our disabled veterans. This bill would prevent agencies, such as the VA, from effectively serving our veterans when they return home from war.

Mr. Speaker, we come to the House floor only to bring up legislation that was recently introduced in August. There have been no hearings in committee, no amendments, no markups, no substantive debate, all of which could have made significant improvements to the bill.

The American people are asking their elected officials to be bipartisan and pass legislation to add more jobs to our economy. We should focus on extending the tax cuts for the middle class, or passing legislation to resolve the looming crisis in the postal service. But, no, the Republican majority and their leadership would rather focus on passing messaging bills before the election. They prefer to leave Washington and campaign, rather than take up the real issues that confront our country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation, and I ask that we get back to doing the work of the people.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the chief sponsor of this legislation, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HANNA).

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6324, the Cutting Federal Unnecessary and Expensive Leasing Act. I sponsored this legislation with my friend and colleague from Georgia (Mr. BARROW).

Mr. Speaker, this is a simple bill which takes up a recommendation of the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles commission to help our Federal Government operate more efficiently. The Federal Government now owns and operates over 500,000 civilian vehicles, according to the Government Accountability Office. Simpson-Bowles found that the government's annual vehicle budget is over \$4 billion, and the Federal fleet has increased by 30,000 vehicles in recent years. These are staggering numbers at any time, but particularly when our national debt has surpassed \$16 trillion.

Rapid advances in technologies like video conferencing and telecommuting are making travel much less necessary, not more. The National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform recommended that the Federal Government's fleet be cut and trimmed by 20 percent. The Cutting FUEL Act does just that. It requires civilian Federal agencies over the next 5 years to spend 20 percent less than their fiscal year 2010 levels on vehicles purchased and leased. The bill exempts our Armed Forces, postal service, and other vehicles which have a national security purpose as determined by the Office of Management and Budget and General Services Administration.

The bill encourages agencies to share vehicles with another agency that may need temporary or long-term use of additional vehicles. For example, if the VA required additional vehicles to meet certain program needs, the administration could task other agencies to help and assist the VA. The benefits of this bill are clear. We will be saving hundreds of millions of dollars over 10 years that are better used for deficit reduction or core agency missions. We will be reducing congestion on our roads. And because these fleets burn more than 1 million gallons of fuel each day, we will be saving fuel costs and reducing emissions. The simple reality is that we have to cut spending, and the Federal Government needs to live within its means. Buying and leasing new cars that the government does not need and cannot afford is a waste of hard-earned taxpayer dollars.

I would also note that the Congress has capped its own spending on vehicle leases for the past 2 years, an amendment which I authored. This bill today is just another commonsense bipartisan solution to save where it makes obvious sense.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to JOHN BARROW from the great State of Georgia.

Mr. BARROW. I thank the gentlelady for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to reach across the aisle in support of the Cutting FUEL Act, a commonsense bill to cut wasteful government spending by reducing the number of nonessential vehicles purchased by the Federal Government.

Any family or business knows that you can't spend beyond your means. The government should work the same way. Buying brand new cars the Federal Government doesn't need is a waste of hard-earned taxpayer dollars, and this bill puts an end to that.

The government spends \$4 billion a year to maintain and operate over 650,000 vehicles. Since 2006, the Federal Government has added over 20,000 vehicles to this fleet, and the cost of operating these vehicles has gone up 5.4 percent.

I recently introduced H.R. 6144, which also cuts the Federal vehicle fleet by 20 percent. Like the Cutting FUEL Act, it makes an exception for vehicles that are essential to national security while reducing the size of the nonessential Federal Government fleet by 20 percent. This is just one of the many recommendations of the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles commission, and over the next 10 years it will save literally hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayer money.

I'm pleased to join my colleague, Representative HANNA, in support of his version of this legislation, because acting in a bipartisan fashion isn't just the right way to do things around here, it's the only way to actually get things done around here. However much we tend to forget that in this body, it's the only way to deal with the other body, and it's the only way to truly represent the Nation as a whole.

The folks we represent deserve a government that is responsible with their hard-earned dollars. I thank Congressman HANNA for introducing the Cutting FUEL Act, and I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense bipartisan bill.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, but I will continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MALONEY. I have no additional speakers and yield myself such time as I may consume.

I do want to stress that we should not be adjourning. We should continue to work and try to do things to preserve Medicare. This Congress has voted to end Medicare as we know it, to turn it into a voucher system.

And we need to extend the middle class tax breaks, and jobs—the President's jobs bill. Many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Republican and Democratic, have come forward with jobs bills that we could consider on passing and working.

I must say they are very urgent priorities, and the American people are calling my office, and I'm sure all of my colleagues, concerning the farm bill. We need to pass a farm bill.

The Violence Against Women Act, this used to be bipartisan legislation. It was introduced as bipartisan legislation. Yet, in this Congress, people have voted to repeal some of the protections, and we have not been able to have a consensus on what has historically been a consensus issue.

On the war on women, I am issuing a report today that shows that the Republican majority is not only out of step with the Main Street of America and the Democratic majority, but they are out of step with the historic Republican Party. The historic Republican Party—in fact, I'll give one example: title X. George H.W. Bush was the author of title X when it passed, and it was signed by a Republican President. This Congress voted to defund title X—family planning, birth control. This is unprecedented.

So there are many things that we need to address. I would say specifically the farm bill and the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. This should be an area where we could all agree and come together. I urge my colleagues not only to vote against this particular bill, but also to speak to their leadership on the other side of the aisle that these pressing issues should be taken up and should be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1620

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

Mr. Speaker, I would hope we would be very bipartisan, at least here in the House of Representatives, in criticizing the United States Senate for not acting on what has passed in this House of Representatives.

It is crystal clear from the record that it has been more than 1,200 days since the United States Senate has addressed and passed a budget. We have passed more than 30 bills that are directly related to jobs and the economy out of the House of Representatives, sit directly in the United States Senate and continue to not be addressed.

I would hope that my colleague would join me in this bipartisan chorus to say this is ridiculous. We can't do the work of the people if the United States Senate doesn't actually do their job. I think I would agree in concept that, yes, there is work to do. Unfortunately, I don't see much of that happening over in the United States Senate.

This bill, H.R. 6324, happens to be a good, bipartisan piece of legislation that reduces spending, something called for in Simpson-Bowles. It is a responsible thing to do. It sets the goal in the framework the agencies would need to comply with. It would save hundreds of millions of dollars, and yet we hear that, well, it's not a time to do this because we need to think about it more.

We're paying more than \$600 million a day in interest on our national debt. If you spent a million dollars a day every day, it would take you almost 3,000 years to get to 1 trillion. Since this President took office when we had \$10 trillion in debt, we're now at \$16 trillion in debt, and all they're concerned about is, well, you know, we've got to talk.

We don't have time. We've got to act now. We've got to pass bills like this. It's irresponsible not to. We need to continue to call upon the Senate to actually do their job and engage in the people's work. The country will be better off.

I encourage my colleagues to join in support of Representative HANNA's bill. It's a good, commonsense, bipartisan piece of legislation with broad support. It's H.R. 6324, and I urge my colleagues to vote "yea."

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6324.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BUFFETT RULE ACT OF 2012

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6410) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for taxpayers making donations with their returns of income tax to the Federal Government to pay down the public debt.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6410

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 "Buffett Rule Act of 2012".

SEC. 2. DONATION TO PAY DOWN NATIONAL DEBT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter A of chapter 61 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new part:

"PART IX—DONATIONS TO PAY DOWN NATIONAL DEBT

"Sec. 6097. Donation to pay down national debt.

"SEC. 6097. DONATION TO PAY DOWN NATIONAL DEBT.

"(a) GENERAL RULE.—Every taxpayer who makes a return of the tax imposed by subtitle A for any taxable year may donate an amount (not less than \$1), in addition to any payment of tax for such taxable year, which shall be deposited in the general fund of the Treasury.

"(b) MANNER AND TIME OF DESIGNATION.—Any donation under subsection (a) for any taxable year—

"(1) shall be made at the time of filing the return of the tax imposed by subtitle A for such taxable year and in such manner as the Secretary may by regulation prescribe, except that—

"(A) the designation for such donation shall be either on the first page of the return or on the page bearing the taxpayer's signature, and

"(B) the designation shall be by a box added to the return, and the text beside the box shall provide:

"By checking here, I signify that in addition to my tax liability (if any), I would like to donate the included payment to be used exclusively for the purpose of paying down the national debt." and

"(2) shall be accompanied by a payment of the amount so designated.

"(c) TREATMENT OF AMOUNTS DONATED.—For purposes of this title, the amount donated by any taxpayer under subsection (a) shall be treated as a contribution made by such taxpayer to the United States on the last date prescribed for filing the return of tax imposed by subtitle A (determined without regard to extensions) or, if later, the date the return is filed.

"(d) TRANSFERS TO ACCOUNT TO REDUCE PUBLIC DEBT.—The Secretary shall, from time to time, transfer to the special account established by section 3113(d) of title 31, United States Code, amounts equal to the amounts donated under this section."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of parts for subchapter A of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

"PART IX. DONATIONS TO PAY DOWN NATIONAL DEBT."

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to returns for taxable years ending after December 31, 2011.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6410, a bill to provide a simple way for individuals to voluntarily donate funds to pay down the national debt. Under current law, you can contribute to debt reduction, but like all things with the IRS, it isn't easy. If you dig deep into the 189 pages of instructions that accompany the 1040, you'll find, on page 88, the following:

Do not add your gift to reduce debt held by the public to any tax you may owe.

To contribute to deficit reduction, one must send a separate check or money order to the Bureau of Public Debt, or they can go online at the Web site and use a credit card. Warren Buffett, who says he wants to pay more in taxes to pay down our debt, can't actually do so when filing his taxes.

H.R. 6410, however, gives Mr. Buffett and generous Americans like him a simple, easy way to help pay down our debt. This legislation adds to appropriate tax forms a box with the captions, and I am quoting:

By checking here, I signify that in addition to my tax liability (if any), I would like to donate the included payment to be used exclusively for the purpose of paying down the national debt.

The Joint Committee on Taxation estimates that H.R. 6410 reduces the public debt by \$135 million over 10 years. It makes it easy for those who want to donate money to the Treasury for debt reduction to voluntarily do so without raising taxes on entrepreneurs and job creators. If Warren Buffett wants to give, then H.R. 6410 allows him to give to his heart's content, and the payments will go directly to an account at the Treasury dedicated exclusively to debt reduction.

Mr. Speaker, it's not enough to speak in political platitudes about what we can do to reduce our debt. Now you can put your money where your mouth is. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in passing this legislation.

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

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

Well, there's nothing wrong with this bill except the label. If there were a fine, I would say, for House legislative mislabeling, House Republicans would have a very large fine to pay. This bill has nothing—zero—to do with the Buffett rule. It has everything to do with the absolute refusal of Americans to face the basic issue. The present tax laws give an inordinate tax break to the very wealthy. The Buffett rule is provided and proposed by President Obama and congressional Democrats.

In addition to reducing the deficit by \$46 billion, it would address a significant inequity in the Code that allows a quarter of taxpayers earning more than a million a year to pay a lower tax rate than millions of middle class families. One of those taxpayers is the Republican Presidential nominee, Governor Mitt Romney, who paid an effective tax rate lower than 15 percent in 2010 and refuses to let the American public see his tax returns for any earlier years.

Indeed, the so-called tax reform legislation from Republicans would do just the opposite: provide massive tax cuts for the very wealthy, doubling down on the Bush tax cuts that have added billions to the deficit and contributed to growing income inequality.

What's more, their idea of tax reform is to heap new taxes on the backs of middle- and lower-income families to pay for all of this. A recent report found that the so-called tax reform outlined in the Ryan budget would give those making over a million dollars a year an additional average tax cut of \$331,000, while those making less than \$200,000 would see a tax increase of \$4,500.

Taxpayers can do exactly what is provided in this bill if they want to donate some of their taxes on the income they have to deficit reduction.