

that access to justice is not an abstract notion. Indeed though—we all know that the Senate holds nearly all the cards in this part of the discussion.

We must ultimately consider the effect the proposed changes have on the court's efficiency and stability of the rule of law in the circuit. My experience is that a decrease in space might lead one to believe that justice might be negatively affected but considering that my colleagues from both sides of the aisle are in full support—we must wait and see and hope that justice is not too deliberate in the affected areas of Mississippi.

The chief argument for this legislation is cost-cutting and simplification—but the Judicial Committee did this with an eye on the budget matters that we have dealt with in this body and Mr. Speaker, I must say that if the cost-savings do not injure the provision of justice then this legislation is supportable in its present form.

I urge my colleagues to Support this important legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2871.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY OF SUPREME COURT POLICE TO PROTECT COURT OFFICIALS OFF SUPREME COURT GROUNDS

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2922) to extend the authority of the Supreme Court Police to protect court officials away from the Supreme Court grounds.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2922

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY OF SUPREME COURT POLICE TO PROTECT COURT OFFICIALS OFF SUPREME COURT GROUNDS.

Section 6121(b)(2) of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking “2013” and inserting “2019”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOLDING. 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 mate-

rials on H.R. 2922, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 2922 is a simple and straightforward measure that accomplishes one purpose. It extends for a period of 6 years the longstanding authority of the Supreme Court Police to provide appropriate security and protective services to Justices, Court employees, and official guests of the Court.

Mr. Speaker, article III of the Constitution provides, in part, “the judicial power of the United States, shall be vested in one Supreme Court.” It is essential to the functioning of the Supreme Court that Justices, Court employees, and their official visitors be able to perform their critical duties with the knowledge that they are provided adequate and appropriate protective services.

For more than three decades, Mr. Speaker, Congress has specifically authorized the Supreme Court Police to provide limited security beyond the Court building for these specific classes of persons. This authority, which is due to expire at the end of this year, has been extended by Congress seven times since 1986. H.R. 2922 is a straightforward extension of this authority for an additional 6 years.

Mr. Speaker, I served in the Federal law enforcement community as a United States attorney in the Eastern District of North Carolina, and I understand that we can never take security for granted. That is why I decided to personally introduce this bill earlier this year.

I want to thank the chairman of the committee, the Honorable BOB GOODLATTE, for recognizing the significance of this bill and moving it forward. I also want to thank the outstanding support of the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. CONYERS, and chairman and vice chairman and ranking member of the Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet Subcommittee, Representatives COBLE, MARINO, and WATT, respectively, for their bipartisan leadership and cooperation in helping to advance this measure.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, this is a good and noncontroversial bill that deserves the House's support. It is also one that we have good reason to expect will be taken up in the other body in the very near future.

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

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

I rise in support of H.R. 2922. I thank the chairman of the committee, Mr. GOODLATTE, and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for introducing this commonsense legislation on which I am also an original cosponsor.

This bill extends the authority of the U.S. Marshal Service and the Supreme Court Police to provide for the security of the Justices on and off the grounds of the Supreme Court for an additional 6 years. It also authorizes those enforcement agencies to protect Supreme Court employees performing their official duties and official guests of the Court when they are not on Court premises.

In 1982, Congress first responded to the call of Chief Justice Warren Burger to provide for the safety of the Justices while traveling or away from the Court grounds. Since then, Congress has regularly reauthorized the statute for various lengths of time.

H.R. 2922 provides for an extension for a period of 6 years. Because the current authorization expires in a matter of months on December 31, 2013, it is imperative that we act to provide the Justices the security we have sanctioned over the years.

The work of the Supreme Court is vital to our Nation, and the role of any one Justice can tip the scales one way or the other on matters of grave consequence. The security we have consistently authorized since 1982 seems to work well, and we should act expeditiously to prevent a lapse in security for the Justices, employees, and dignitaries visiting the Court.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for speakers, and I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

This is a bipartisan measure that extends long-existing previous policy, and it is certainly critically needed and should be done as soon as possible so as not to run up against the deadline at the end of the year.

Mr. WATT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOLDING. I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. WATT. Mr. Speaker, for the record, I neglected to indicate in my comments that our colleague, the chair of the subcommittee, announced last week during the period that we were out on the Veterans Day district work period that he was not planning to run for Congress again, and I hadn't recognized that he was still on the floor.

So I wanted to express how important a contribution he has made to this institution for many years. I am not going to tell you how many. More than I have been here, and I have been here 21 years. He was here when I got here. I always tell people that, of all of the people in the North Carolina delegation when I was elected to Congress, he was the first member of the North Carolina delegation to come to my office and welcome me to Congress, and we have been very good friends ever since then. I am sure all of his virtues in the next year will be appropriately extolled, but it is going to be a big loss for us.

I appreciate the gentleman yielding to me to make those comments because I thought Mr. COBLE had left the

floor, and I had intended to make them earlier when he was here. I am glad to see he is here.

Mr. COBLE. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE), the leader of the North Carolina delegation.

Mr. COBLE. I thank the gentleman.

MEL, I appreciate those generous words. Thank you for your generous words as well. I won't be verbose or lengthy, but just thanks to all of you.

I have another year, MEL. I won't be gone for another year. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure to be here on the floor with Chairman COBLE. It is just a point of personal privilege to say that, long ago when I was a staff member up here on Capitol Hill, I had a conversation with the chairman and asked him what I should do next. He suggested that I go and be an assistant United States attorney just like he was before he came to Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote on this, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation which like others before us, demonstrates the Congressional power over the Supreme and federal courts in even the most mundane matters—in this case—security.

It is critical to the day-to-day functioning of the Supreme Court that Justices, Court employees, and visitors to the Court be provided with adequate and appropriate protection. The Supreme Court Police are charged with enforcing the law at the Supreme Court building and its grounds as well as protecting Justices and other court employees on and off the grounds. Congress has provided statutory authority for the Supreme Court Police to provide security beyond the Court building for Justices, Court employees and official visitors since 1982. Since 1986, Congress has extended this off-grounds authority seven times and recent events tend to demonstrate that this authority is as important as ever.

The authority is due to sunset on December 31, 2013 and the current authority and jurisdiction of the Supreme Court Police is essential to the force's performance of its everyday duties. Supreme Court Police regularly provide security to Justices by transporting and accompanying them to official functions in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, and on occasion, outside the area when they or official guests travel on Court business. Threats to personal safety may require Justices to be accompanied by police between their home and the Court—and although incidents have been few—we must continue to be vigilant to any and all security matters.

I close by harking back to our Founders, the men who forged the underpinnings of this great nation. They had the vision and forethought to craft what is the world's most admired democracy, replete with the vaunted three branches of government. It is not perfect though, and in my role as a representative for the people of the 18th District of Texas, I humbly seek to make it better and the passage of this bipartisan legislation today moves us closer

to working in harmony on other matters affecting the Judiciary—matters which the American people are asking us to do. I am certain that on that score we share the same values.

I urge my colleagues to Support this important legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2922.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SUPPORTING THE RIGHT TO COUNSEL

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 196) supporting the Sixth Amendment to the United States Constitution, the right to counsel, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 196

Whereas on March 18, 1963, the Supreme Court recognized in *Gideon v. Wainwright* that counsel must be provided to indigent defendants in all felony cases;

Whereas the Supreme Court held that providing counsel to indigent defendants in all felony cases meets the essential requirements of the Sixth Amendment to the United States Constitution; and

Whereas the Supreme Court held in *Argersinger v. Hamlin* that absent a knowing and intelligent waiver, no person may be imprisoned for any offense, whether classified as petty, misdemeanor, or felony, unless they were represented by counsel at their trial: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the Sixth Amendment to the United States Constitution, the right to counsel;

(2) supports strategies to improve the criminal justice system to ensure that indigent defendants in all felony cases are adequately represented by counsel; and

(3) urges States to work to ensure that indigent defendants in all felony cases are adequately represented by counsel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOLDING. 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 H. Res. 196, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

The Sixth Amendment of the United States Constitution states that "in all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right . . . to have the assistance of counsel for his defence." H. Res. 196 supports the Sixth Amendment, the right to counsel, and strategies to ensure that indigent defendants in all felony cases are adequately represented by counsel.

Fifty years ago, Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court, in *Gideon v. Wainwright*, held that providing counsel to indigent defendants is one of the essential requirements of the Sixth Amendment. Writing for the majority, Justice Black stated:

From the very beginning, our State and national constitutions and laws have laid great emphasis on procedural and substantive safeguards designed to assure fair trials before impartial tribunals in which every defendant stands equal before the law.

Since the *Gideon* decision, the Supreme Court has held that absent a knowing and intelligent waiver, no person may be imprisoned for any offense, whether classified as petty, misdemeanor, or felony, unless that person was represented by counsel at his or her trial.

This resolution reaffirms Congress' continued commitment to pursuing fairness in our criminal justice system and calls on States to help ensure that defendants are adequately represented by counsel.

I urge Members to support it, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

At the beginning of this Congress, Members read aloud the Constitution of the United States from the floor of this very Chamber. That reading, of course, included the Bill of Rights, those first 10 amendments so vital to protecting the individual freedoms of all Americans.

Today, I urge my colleagues to support the passage of H. Res. 196, a bipartisan resolution affirming our support for the Sixth Amendment to our Constitution.

The Sixth Amendment guarantees the right of all Americans to a fair trial. It also reads, "In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall . . . have the assistance of counsel for his defence."

We all agree that the right to counsel for anyone accused of a crime is the foundation of individual liberty. It is essential to the rule of law and the basic principle that, in America, the government cannot take away any citizen's freedom without a fair trial. H. Res. 196 is a bipartisan resolution reaffirming the support of this Congress for the Sixth Amendment right to counsel at a time when this right is too often trampled in our modern-day justice system.