the great State of Michigan (Mr. Con-YERS).

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I wanted to commend the creative inquiry of the gentlelady from Texas in examining this measure to make it clear to us, through her amendment, that this places disclosure burdens on trusts and asbestos victims but not on the corporations, and that is what she seeks to deal with. So this bill helps this be accomplished. And what is so critical about it is that we now have a more balanced approach than is currently in the bill. So please support the Jackson Lee amendment.

I thank the gentlelady for yielding. Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the distinguished gentleman for his important remarks.

Mr. Chairman, let me quickly say, Mr. Conyers, Mr. Ranking Member, you were superbly right. The plaintiffs in litigation have had their right of exchange of information. What our friends are trying to do on the other side of the aisle is to make the trusts, now, a courtroom where information is dragged out of the victim, but it is not asked for from the defendants, the ones who have filed for bankruptcy, the ones who have left the victims to suffer and to fend for themselves.

I ask my colleagues to make this fair and require the asbestos company to give us where the asbestos-remaining products are so that we can save lives. If there is transparency, if the FACT bill would be fair, they would then have information coming from both parties, not only the victims, the plaintiffs, but they would have it coming from the asbestos companies that have driven up the numbers of those suffering from lung disease and cancer.

I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment.

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

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS.

Washington, DC, November 12, 2013.
DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: I am writing to ex-

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: I am writing to express the strong opposition of the AFL-CIO to H.R. 982, the "Furthering Asbestos Claim Transparency Act" (FACT Act). This legislation would invade the privacy of asbestos victims by posting personal exposure and medical information online and create new barriers to victims receiving compensation for their asbestos diseases. The AFL-CIO urges you to oppose this harmful bill.

Decades of uncontrolled use of asbestos, even after its hazards were known, have resulted in a legacy of disease and death. Hundreds of thousands of workers and family members have suffered or died of asbestos-related cancers and lung disease, and the toll continues. Each year an estimated 10,000 people in the United States are expected to die from asbestos related diseases.

Asbestos victims have faced huge barriers and obstacles to receiving compensation for their diseases. Major asbestos producers refused to accept responsibility and most declared bankruptcy in an attempt to limit their future liability. In 1994 Congress passed special legislation that allowed the asbestos companies to set up bankruptcy trusts to compensate asbestos victims and reorganize under the bankruptcy law. But these trusts don't have adequate funding to provide just compensation, and according to a 2010 RAND

study, the median payment across the trusts is only 25 percent of the claim's value. With compensation from these trusts so limited, asbestos victims have sought redress from the manufacturers of other asbestos products to which they were expected.

to which they were exposed.

The AFL-CIO is well aware that the system for compensating asbestos disease victims has had its share of problems, with victims facing delays and inadequate compensation and too much money being spent on defendant and plaintiff lawyers. We have spent years of effort trying to seek solutions to make the asbestos compensation system fairer and more effective. But H.R. 982 does nothing to improve compensation for asbestos victims and would in fact make the situation even worse. In our view, the bill is simply an effort by asbestos manufacturers who still are subject to asbestos lawsuits to avoid liability for diseases caused by exposure to

their products. H.R. 982 would require personally identifiable exposure histories and disease information for each asbestos victim filing a claim with an asbestos trust, and related payment information, to be posted on a public docket. This public posting is an extreme invasion of privacy. It would give unfettered access to employers, insurance companies, workers compensation carriers and others who could use this information for any purpose including blacklisting workers from employment and fighting compensation claims.

The bill would also require asbestos trusts to provide on demand to asbestos defendants and litigants any information related to payments made by and claims filed with the trusts. This would place unnecessary and added burdens on the trusts, delaying muchneeded compensation for asbestos victims. Such a provision allows asbestos defendants to bypass the established rules of discovery in the civil justice system, and provides broad, unrestricted access to personal information with no limitations on its use.

Congress should be helping the hundreds of thousands of individuals who are suffering from disabling and deadly asbestos diseases, not further victimizing them by invading their privacy and subjecting them to potential blacklisting and discrimination. The AFL-CIO strongly urges you to oppose H.R. 982

Sincerely,

WILLIAM SAMUEL,

Director,

Government Affairs Department.
Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. Chairman, I

yield myself the balance of the time in opposition to the amendment.

I just have to say that this amendment goes well beyond the scope of this legislation in terms of what it would do in terms of discovery in State courts and gathering various types of information that is already readily and easily discoverable in those proceedings, including, if necessary, in the bankruptcy court.

What it doesn't get at, and the FACT Act does, is information that is not otherwise available to all of the parties to all of those proceedings to determine whether there are duplicative claims, whether there are fraudulent claims, whether there are claims where one party is claiming to have the same disease caused by two different places of employment or having claimed the same disease caused by two different instrumentalities in two different places. That is what we need to know. That is why the FACT Act is necessary

I oppose the amendment, urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment.

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

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. Jackson Lee).

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. 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. FARENTHOLD) having assumed the chair, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, 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. 982) to amend title 11 of the United States Code to require the public disclosure by trusts established under section 524(g) of such title, of quarterly reports that contain detailed information regarding the receipt and disposition of claims for injuries based on exposure to asbestos; and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1617

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker protempore (Mrs. WALORSKI) at 4 o'clock and 17 minutes p.m.

FURTHERING ASBESTOS CLAIM TRANSPARENCY (FACT) ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 403 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 982.

Will the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) kindly resume the chair.

□ 1618

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 982) to amend title 11 of the United States Code to require the public disclosure by trusts established under section 524(g) of such title, of quarterly reports that contain detailed information

regarding the receipt and disposition of claims for injuries based on exposure to asbestos; and for other purposes, with Mr. BISHOP of Utah in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, a request for a recorded vote on amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 113-264 by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) had been postponed.

Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in House Report 113-264 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Mr. Cohen of Tennessee.

Amendment No. 2 by Mr. NADLER of New York.

Amendment No. 3 by Ms. Jackson LEE of Texas.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. COHEN

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

Clerk will redesignate The amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 198, noes 223, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 575]

AVES-198

	111120 100	
Andrews	Cummings	Himes
Barber	Davis (CA)	Hinojosa
Barrow (GA)	Davis, Danny	Holt
Bass	DeFazio	Honda
Beatty	DeGette	Horsford
Becerra	Delaney	Hoyer
Bera (CA)	DeLauro	Huffman
Bishop (GA)	DelBene	Israel
Bishop (NY)	Deutch	Jackson Lee
Blumenauer	Dingell	Jeffries
Bonamici	Doggett	Johnson (GA)
Brady (PA)	Doyle	Johnson, E. B.
Braley (IA)	Duckworth	Kaptur
Brown (FL)	Edwards	Keating
Brownley (CA)	Ellison	Kelly (IL)
Bustos	Engel	Kennedy
Butterfield	Enyart	Kildee
Capps	Eshoo	Kilmer
Capuano	Esty	Kind
Cárdenas	Farr	Kirkpatrick
Carney	Fattah	Kuster
Carson (IN)	Foster	Langevin
Cartwright	Frankel (FL)	Larsen (WA)
Castor (FL)	Fudge	Larson (CT)
Castro (TX)	Gabbard	Lee (CA)
Chu	Gallego	Levin
Cicilline	Garamendi	Lewis
Clarke	Garcia	Lipinski
Clay	Gibson	Loebsack
Cleaver	Grayson	Loebsack Lofgren
Clyburn	Green, Al	Lorgren
Cohen	Green, Gene	Lowenthan
Connolly	Grijalva	
Conyers	Gutiérrez	Lujan Grisham (NM)
Cooper	Hahn	
Costa	Hanabusa	Luján, Ben Ray
Courtney	Hastings (FL)	(NM)
Crowley	Heck (WA)	Lynch Maffei
Cuellar	Higgins	maiiei

Peters (MI) Maloney. Carolyn Peterson Maloney, Sean Pingree (ME) McCollum Pocan McDermott Polis McGovern Price (NC) McIntyre Quiglev McNerney Rahall Rangel Meeks Meng Richmond Michaud Roybal-Allard Miller, George Ruiz Moore Ruppersberger Ryan (OH) Moran Murphy (FL) Sánchez, Linda Nadler T. Napolitano Sanchez, Loretta Neal Sarbanes Negrete McLeod Schakowsky Nolan Schiff O'Rourke Schneider Owens Schrader Pallone Schwartz Pascrell Scott (VA) Pastor (AZ) Scott, David Serrano Pelosi Sewell (AL)

Shea-Porter

Sherman

Perlmutter

Peters (CA)

Aderholt

Amash

Amodei

Bachus

Barton

Benishek

Bentivolio

Bishop (UT)

Blackburn

Brady (TX)

Bridenstine

Brooks (AL)

Brooks (IN)

Broun (GA)

Buchanan

Bucshon

Burgess

Calvert

Camp

Cantor

Capito

Carter

Cassidy

Chabot

Coble

Cole

Cook

Cotton

Cramer

Crawford

Crenshaw

Davis, Rodney

Daines

Denham

DeSantis

DesJarlais

Diaz-Balart

Duncan (SC)

Duncan (TN)

Farenthold

Fitzpatrick

Fleischmann

Fortenberry

Franks (AZ)

Frelinghuysen

Mica

Miller (FL)

Tiberi Tipton

Cuellar

Dent

Duffy

Ellmers

Fincher

Fleming

Flores

Forbes

Foxx

Gardner

Garrett

Gerlach

Gibbs

Chaffetz

Coffman

Collins (GA)

Collins (NY)

Conaway

Boustany

Bilirakis

Black

Barr

Barletta

Bachmann

Gingrey (GA) Miller (MI) Miller, Gary Gohmert Goodlatte Mullin Gosar Mulvanev Gowdy Murphy (PA) Neugebauer Granger Graves (GA) Noem Graves (MO) Nugent Griffin (AR) Nunes Griffith (VA) Nunnelee Olson Grimm Guthrie Palazzo Hall Paulsen Hanna Pearce Perry Harper Harris Petri Hartzler Pittenger Hastings (WA) Pitts Heck (NV) Poe (TX) Hensarling Pompeo Holding Posey Price (GA) Hudson Huelskamp Radel Huizenga (MI) Reed Reichert Hultgren Hunter Renacci Hurt. Ribble Rice (SC) Issa Jenkins Rigell Johnson (OH) Roby Roe (TN) Johnson, Sam Rogers (AL) Jordan Joyce Rogers (KY) Kelly (PA) Rogers (MI) King (IA) Rohrabacher King (NY) Rokita Kingston Rooney Kinzinger (IL) Ros-Lehtinen Kline Roskam Labradoi Ross LaMalfa Rothfus Lamborn Rovce Lance Runyan Lankford Ryan (WI) Latham Salmon Sanford LoBiondo Scalise Schock Long Lucas Schweikert Luetkemever Scott, Austin Sensenbrenner Lummis Marchant Sessions Marino Shimkus Massie Shuster Matheson Simpson McCarthy (CA) Smith (MO) McCaul Smith (NE) McClintock Smith (NJ) McHenry Smith (TX) McKeon Southerland McKinley Stewart McMorris Stivers Rodgers Stockman Meadows Stutzman Thompson (PA) Meehan Messer Thornberry

Sinema. Sires Slaughter Smith (WA) Speier Swalwell (CA) Takano Terry Thompson (CA) Thompson (MS) Tierney Titus Tonko Tsongas Van Hollen Vargas Veasev Vela Velázquez Visclosky Walz Wasserman Schultz Waters Watt Waxman Welch Wilson (FL) Yarmuth

NOES-223

Turner Upton Valadao Wagner Walberg Walden Walorski

Weber (TX) Wolf Webster (FL) Womack Westmoreland Woodall Whitfield Yoder Williams Yoho Wilson (SC) Young (IN) Wittman

NOT VOTING-

Campbell Jones Rush Culberson Matsui Wenstrup Herrera Beutler McCarthy (NY) Young (AK)

□ 1646

Messrs. BENISHEK, BENTIVOLIO, REED, LUCAS, DeSANTIS, PETRI, HASTINGS of Washington, and SMITH of Nebraska changed their vote from "ave" to "no."

Messrs. PETERSON, PETERS California, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Messrs. GARAMENDI. GRIJALVA. and McDERMOTT changed their vote from "no" to "ave."

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO 2 OFFERED BY MR NADLER

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

Clerk will redesignate the amendment

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote. The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 194, noes 226, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 576]

AYES-194

Andrews Cummings Barber Davis (CA) Barrow (GA) Davis, Danny DeFazio Bass Beatty DeGette Delaney Becerra Bera (CA) DeLauro Bishop (GA) DelBene Bishop (NY) Deutch Blumenauer Dingell Bonamici Doggett Brady (PA) Dovle Braley (IA) Duckworth Brown (FL) Edwards Brownley (CA) Ellison Bustos Butterfield Engel Enyart Capps Eshoo Capuano Cárdenas Esty Farr Carney Fattah Carson (IN) Foster Cartwright Frankel (FL) Castor (FL) Fudge Gabbard Castro (TX) Gallego Chu Cicilline Garamendi Clarke Garcia. Clay Grayson Cleaver Green, Al Clyburn Green, Gene Cohen Grijalva Connolly Hahn Hanabusa Convers Cooper Hastings (FL) Courtney Heck (WA) Crowley Higgins

Hinojosa Holt Honda Horsford Hoyer Huffman Israel Jackson Lee Jeffries Johnson (GA) Johnson, E. B. Kaptur Keating Kelly (IL) Kennedy Kildee Kilmer Kind Kirkpatrick Kuster Langevin Larsen (WA) Larson (CT) Lee (CA) Levin Lewis Lipinski Loebsack Lofgren Lowenthal Lowey Lujan Grisham (NM) Luján, Ben Ray

(NM)

Lvnch

Maffei

Peters (MI)

Pingree (ME)

Peterson

Price (NC)

Pocan

Polis

Quiglev

Rahall

Rangel

Ruiz

Richmond

Roybal-Allard

Ruppersberger

Sánchez, Linda

Sanchez, Loretta

Ryan (OH)

Sarbanes

Schneider

Scott (VA)

Scott, David

Sewell (AL)

Shea-Porter

Gingrey (GA)

Sherman

Gibbs Gibson

Gohmert

Gosar

Gowdy

Granger

Grimm

Hall

Hanna

Harper

Harris

Hartzler

Heck (NV)

Hensarling

Huelskamp

Hultgren

Hunter

Jenkins

Jordan

Joyce Kelly (PA)

King (IA)

King (NY)

Kingston

Labrador

LaMalfa

Lance

Latta

Long Lucas

Lummis

Marino

Massie

McCaul

McHenry

McKeon

McKinley

McMorris Rodgers

Meehan

Marchant

Matheson

McClintock

McCarthy (CA)

Lamborn

Lankford

LoBiondo

Luetkemeyer

Latham

Kline

Kinzinger (IL)

Hurt

Tssa.

Huizenga (MI)

Johnson (OH)

Johnson, Sam

Holding

Hudson

Hastings (WA)

Graves (GA)

Graves (MO)

Griffin (AR)

Griffith (VA)

Goodlatte

Schrader

Schiff

Schakowsky

Maloney. Carolyn Maloney, Sean McCollum McDermott McGovern McIntyre McNerney Meeks Meng Michaud Miller, George Moore Moran Murphy (FL) Nadler Napolitano Neal Negrete McLeod O'Rourke Owens Pallone Pascrell Pastor (AZ) Payne Pelosi Perlmutter Peters (CA)

Sinema Sires Slaughter Smith (WA) Speier Swalwell (CA) Takano Thompson (CA) Thompson (MS) Tiernev Titus Tonko Tsongas Van Hollen Vargas Veasey Vela. Velázquez Visclosky Walz Wasserman Schultz Waters

Watt

Waxman

Yarmuth

Wilson (FL)

Welch

NOES-226

Aderholt Amash Amodei Bachmann Bachus Barletta Barr Barton Benishek Bentivolio Bilirakis Bishop (UT) Black Blackburn Boustany Brady (TX) Bridenstine Brooks (AL) Brooks (IN) Broun (GA) Buchanan Bucshon Burgess Calvert Camp Cantor Capito Carter Cassidy Chabot Chaffetz Coble Coffman Cole Collins (GA) Collins (NY) Conaway Cook Costa Cotton Cramer Crawford Crenshaw Daines Davis, Rodney Denham Dent DeSantis DesJarlais Diaz-Balart Duffy Duncan (SC) Duncan (TN) Ellmers Farenthold Fincher Fitzpatrick Fleischmann Fleming Flores Forbes Fortenberry Foxx Franks (AZ) Frelinghuysen

Gardner

Garrett

Gerlach

Mica Miller (FL) Miller (MI) Miller, Gary Mullin Mulvaney Murphy (PA) Neugebauer Noem Nugent Nunes Nunnelee Olson Palazzo Paulsen Pearce Perry Petri Pittenger Pitts Poe (TX) Pompeo Price (GA) Radel

Reed

Reichert

Renacci Ribble Rice (SC) Rigell Roby Roe (TN) Rogers (AL) Rogers (KY) Rogers (MI) Rohrabacher Rokita Roonev Ros-Lehtinen Roskam Ross Rothfus Royce Runvan Ryan (WI) Salmon Sanford Scalise Schock Schweikert Scott, Austin Sensenbrenner Sessions Shimkus Shuster Simpson Smith (MO) Smith (NE) Smith (NJ) Smith (TX) Southerland Stewart Stivers Stockman Stutzman

Thompson (PA)

Walden Wittman Thornberry Tiberi Walorski Wolf Tipton Weber (TX) Womack Turner Webster (FL) Woodall Westmoreland Upton Yoder Valadao Whitfield Yoho Wagner Williams Young (IN) Walberg Wilson (SC)

NOT VOTING-10

Campbell Wenstrup Jones Culberson Matsui Young (AK) Gutiérrez McCarthy (NY) Herrera Beutler Rush

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining

\sqcap 1653

So the amendment was rejected. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. Jackson Lee) which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

Clerk will redesignate The the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote. The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 195, noes 226, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 577]

AYES-195

DeLauro Andrews Kaptur Barber Barrow (GA) Deutch Kelly (IL) Dingell Kennedy Bass Kildee Beatty Becerra Dovle Kilmer Bera (CA) Duckworth Kind Bishop (GA) Edwards Kirkpatrick Bishop (NY Ellison Kuster Langevin Blumenauer Engel Bonamici Enyart Larsen (WA) Brady (PA) Eshoo Larson (CT) Braley (IA) Esty Lee (CA) Brown (FL Farr Levin Brownley (CA) Fattah Lewis Bustos Foster Lipinski Butterfield Frankel (FL) Loebsack Lofgren Capps Fudge Gabbard Capuano Lowenthal Cárdenas Gallego Lowey Garamendi Lujan Grisham Carnev Carson (IN) Garcia Luján, Ben Ray Cartwright Grayson Castor (FL) Green, Al (NM) Green, Gene Castro (TX) Lynch Chu Grijalya Maffei Gutiérrez Cicilline Maloney, Hahn Carolyn Clarke Hanabusa. Malonev. Sean Clay Hastings (FL) Cleaver McCollum Clyburn Heck (WA) McDermott Cohen Higgins McGovern Connolly Himes McIntyre Conyers Hinojosa McNerney Cooper Holt Meeks Courtney Honda Meng Michaud Miller, George Crowley Horsford Cuellar Hoyer Cummings Huffman Moore Davis (CA) Israel Jackson Lee Moran Murphy (FL) Davis, Danny Jeffries DeFazio Nadler Johnson (GA) DeGette Napolitano Delaney Johnson, E. B. Neal

Negrete McLeod Ruppersberger Nolan Ryan (OH) O'Rourke Sánchez, Linda Owens Pallone Sanchez, Loretta Pascrell Sarbanes Schakowsky Pastor (AZ) Payne Schiff Pelosi Schneider Perlmutter Schrader Peters (CA) Schwartz Peters (MI) Scott (VA) Peterson Scott, David Pingree (ME) Serrano Sewell (AL) Pocan Shea-Porter Polis Price (NC) Sherman Quigley Sinema Rahall Sires Rangel Slaughter Richmond Smith (WA) Roybal-Allard Speier Swalwell (CA) Ruiz

Aderholt

Amash

Amodei

Bachus

Barton

Black

Boustany

Buchanan

Bucshon

Burgess Calvert

Camp

Cantor

Capito

Carter

Cassidy

Chaffetz

Coffman

Conaway

Coble

Cole

Cook

Costa

Cotton

Cramer

Daines

Denham

DeSantis

Dent

Duffy

Ellmers

Fincher

Fleming

Flores

Forbes

Foxx

Gardner

Garrett

Gerlach

Gibbs

Gibson

Gohmert

Goodlatte

Crawford

Crenshaw

Benishek

Barr

Barletta

NOES-

Gowdy Granger Graves (GA) Bachmann Graves (MO) Griffin (AR) Griffith (VA) Grimm Guthrie Hall Hanna Bilirakis Bishop (UT) Harper Harris Hartzler Hastings (WA) Heck (NV) Blackburn Brady (TX) Hensarling Bridenstine Holding Hudson Brooks (AL) Brooks (IN) Huelskamp Broun (GA) Huizenga (MI) Hultgren Hunter Hurt Issa Jenkins Johnson (OH) Johnson, Sam Jordan Joyce Kelly (PA) King (IA) King (NY) Kingston Kinzinger (IL) Collins (GA) Kline Labrador LaMalfa Lamborn Lankford Latham Latta LoBiondo Long Davis, Rodney Lucas Luetkemeyer Lummis Marchant DesJarlais Marino Diaz-Balart Massie Matheson Duncan (SC) McCarthy (CA) Duncan (TN) McCaul McClintock Farenthold McHenry McKeon Fitzpatrick McKinley McMorris Fleischmann Rodgers Meadows Meehan Fortenberry Messer Mica. Franks (AZ) Miller (FL) Frelinghuysen Miller (MI) Miller, Gary Mullin Mulvaney Murphy (PA) Neugebauer Gingrey (GA) Noem Nugent Nunes Nunnelee

Takano Thompson (CA) Thompson (MS) Tierney Titus Tonko Tsongas Van Hollen Vargas Veasev Vela. Velázquez Visclosky Walz Wasserman Schultz Waters Watt Waxman Welch Wilson (FL)

Yarmuth Olson Palazzo Paulsen Pearce Petri Pittenger Pitts Poe (TX) Pompeo Posey Price (GA) Radel Reed Reichert Renacci Ribble Rice (SC) Rigell Roby Roe (TN) Rogers (AL) Rogers (KY) Rogers (MI) Rohrabacher Rokita Rooney Ros-Lehtinen Roskam Ross Rothfus Royce Runvan Ryan (WI) Salmon Sanford Scalise Schock Schweikert Scott, Austin Sensenbrenner Sessions Shimkus Shuster Simpson Smith (MO)

Smith (NE)

Smith (NJ)

Smith (TX)

Stewart

Stockman

Stutzman

Thornberry

Thompson (PA)

Stivers

Terry

Tiberi

Tipton

Turner

Upton

Valadao

Wagner

Walberg

Walden

Walorski

Whitfield

Williams

Wittman

Wilson (SC)

Weber (TX)

Webster (FL)

Westmoreland

Southerland

Wolf Woodall Yoho Womack Yoder Young (IN)

NOT VOTING-9

□ 1658

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The CHAIR. There being no further amendments, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MEADOWS) having assumed the chair, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, 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. 982) to amend title 11 of the United States Code to require the public disclosure by trusts established under section 524(g) of such title, of quarterly reports that contain detailed information regarding the receipt and disposition of claims for injuries based on exposure to asbestos; and for other purposes, pursuant to House Resolution 403, reported the bill back to the

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. OWENS. I am opposed to the bill. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recom-

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Owens moves to recommit the bill (H.R. 982) to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the bill back to the House forthwith with the following amendments:

Redesignate section 3 as section 4. Insert after section 2 the following:

SEC. 3. PROTECTING THE PRIVACY OF U.S. SERV-ICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS AND ENSURING CLAIMS ARE PAID BE-FORE DEATH.

Paragraph (8) of section 524(g) of title 11 of the United States Code, as added by section 2, shall not apply with respect to a claimant who is or has been a member of the Armed Forces of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

This motion to recommit very simply exempts veterans and Active Duty servicemembers from the reporting requirements of the underlying bill. We celebrated Veterans Day 2 days ago with much thanks and praise. Now we propose to punish those very same folks whom we praised. Under the guise of transparency, H.R. 982 requires quarterly reports of claims and payouts made against asbestos trust funds, which provide remedies to victims of asbestos exposure while allowing companies to continue to operate. A strict set of fraud prevention steps already exists when seeking an asbestos claim. In fact, a 2011 GAO report did not find any evidence of overt fraud during its examination of asbestos trusts.

Mr. Speaker, 30 percent of asbestos victims are veterans. Let me repeat that: 30 percent of asbestos victims are veterans. The reporting requirement created by this bill will delay claims payments to these men and women who have served their country and are now suffering from deadly diseases, including lung cancer and mesothelioma, because of asbestos exposure. Victims of mesothelioma typically only live 4 to 18 months after diagnosis. This final amendment will ensure we do not unnecessarily delay a claim to a veteran with just months to live.

In addition to the delayed payment of claims, the personal information required to be submitted in these quarterly reports poses a serious threat to privacy by forcing asbestos trust funds to reveal, on a public database, personally identifiable information about asbestos victims and their families. Why would we subject a gravely ill veteran battling a disease like cancer to the additional risk of identity theft?

This motion to recommit very simply exempts veterans and Active Duty servicemembers from the onerous and invasive reporting requirements of the underlying bill. These heroes have sacrificed for our Nation. Join me in protecting their privacy and ensuring their asbestos claims are paid before death.

We will punish those whom we praise, and that is simply unacceptable. I urge support for this final amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, the FACT Act is a simple measure to address an obvious problem. The lack of transparency that exists in the asbestos bankruptcy trust system cannot be allowed to continue. Fraudulent claims are diluting the ability of too many trusts to provide for the recoveries of future asbestos victims, including our Nation's veterans, who must often rely solely on the bankruptcy process to obtain a recovery for their asbestos injury.

The FACT Act will help preserve the finite amount of trust resources available for all future victims by increasing transparency in the asbestos bankruptcy trust system, thereby facili-

tating a reduction in fraud. The FACT Act achieves transparency through a measured approach, carefully crafted to provide strong privacy protections and respect states' rights, and strong privacy protections for veterans and all other victims.

This will not delay compensation to asbestos victims but will ensure that the true victims, including victims who will be identified in the future as suffering from asbestos injuries, are not kept from having compensation. These trusts are being used up as a result of fraudulent claims. The asbestos bankruptcy trusts need additional transparency so they can root out fraud and protect recoveries for future asbestos victims. The FACT Act provides this vital sunshine in a simple, efficient manner. It is a 2-page bill.

I commend my colleagues, Mr. FARENTHOLD of Texas and Mr. MATHESON of Utah, for bringing forward this bipartisan legal reform. I urge my colleagues to vote against this motion to recommit and to support the FACT Act.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on the passage of the bill, if ordered, and approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 197, nays 224, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 578] YEAS—197

Clyburn Andrews Foster Barber Cohen Frankel (FL) Barrow (GA) Connolly Fudge Gabbard Bass Conyers Gallego Beatty Cooper Garamendi Becerra Costa Bera (CA) Courtney Garcia Bishop (GA) Crowley Grayson Bishop (NY) Cuellar Green, Al Blumenauer Cummings Green, Gene Bonamici Davis (CA) Grijalya. Brady (PA) Davis, Danny Gutiérrez Hahn Braley (IA) DeFazio Brown (FL) DeGette Hanabusa Hastings (FL) Brownley (CA) Delaney Heck (WA) Bustos DeLauro Butterfield DelBene Higgins Capps Deutch Himes Capuano Dingell Hinojosa Cárdenas Doggett Holt Honda Carney Doyle Carson (IN) Duckworth Horsford Cartwright Edwards Hover Ellison Huffman Castor (FL) Castro (TX) Engel Israel Jackson Lee Chu Envart Cicilline Eshoo Clarke Estv Johnson (GA) Clav Farr Johnson, E. B. Kaptur

Stewart

Smith (NJ) Smith (TX)

Southerland

Stewart

Keating Moore Kelly (IL) Moran Kennedy Murphy (FL) Kildee Nadler Kilmer Napolitano Kind Neal Kirknatrick Kuster Nolan Langevin O'Rourke Larsen (WA) Owens Pallone Larson (CT) Lee (CA) Pascrell Pastor (AZ) Levin Lewis Payne Lipinski Pelosi Loebsack Perlmutter Lofgren Peters (CA) Lowenthal Peters (MI) Lowey Peterson Lujan Grisham Pingree (ME) (NM) Pocan Luján, Ben Ray Polis (NM) Price (NC) Lynch Quigley Maffei Rahall Maloney Rangel Carolyn Richmond Maloney, Sean Matsui Ruiz McCollum McDermott Ryan (OH) McGovern McIntyre McNernev Sanchez, Loretta Meeks Sarbanes Meng Schakowsky Michaud Schiff Miller, George Schneider

Schrader Schwartz Serrano Negrete McLeod Sherman Sinema Sires Slaughter Speier Takano Tierney Titus Tonko Tsongas Vargas Veasey Vela. Velázquez Roybal-Allard Visclosky Walz Ruppersberger Schultz Sánchez, Linda Waters

Scott (VA) Scott, David Sewell (AL) Shea-Porter Smith (WA) Swalwell (CA) Thompson (CA) Thompson (MS) Van Hollen Wasserman Watt Waxman Welch Wilson (FL) Yarmuth

NAYS-224

T.

Forbes

Foxx

Gardner

Garrett

Gerlach

Gibbs

Gosar

Gowdy

Granger

Grimm

Guthrie

Hall

Hanna

Harper

Harris

Hartzler

Heck (NV)

Hensarling

Huelskamp

Hultgren

Hunter

Jenkins

Jordan

Joyce

Kelly (PA)

King (IA)

King (NY)

Kingston

Labrador

LaMalfa

Lamborn

Lance Lankford

Latham

LoBiondo

Luetkemeyer

Latta

Long

Lucas

Fleming

Flores

Kline

Kinzinger (IL)

Hurt

Issa

Huizenga (MI)

Johnson (OH)

Johnson, Sam

Holding

Hudson

Hastings (WA)

Graves (GA)

Graves (MO)

Griffin (AR.)

Griffith (VA)

Gibson

Gohmert

Goodlatte

Fortenberry

Frelinghuysen

Gingrey (GA)

Aderholt Amash Amodei Bachmann Bachus Barletta Barr Barton Benishek Bentivolio Bilirakis Bishop (UT) Black Blackburn Boustany Brady (TX) Bridenstine Brooks (AL) Brooks (IN) Broun (GA) Buchanan Bucshon Burgess Calvert Camp Cantor Capito Carter Cassidy Chabot Chaffetz Coble Coffman Cole Collins (GA) Collins (NY) Conaway Cook Cotton Cramer Crawford Crenshaw Daines Davis, Rodney Denham Dent DeSantis DesJarlais Diaz-Balart Duffv Duncan (SC) Duncan (TN) Ellmers Farenthold Fincher Fitzpatrick Fleischmann

Marchant Marino Massie Matheson McCarthy (CA) McCaul McClintock McHenry McKeon McKinley McMorris Rodgers Meadows Meehan Messer Mica Miller (FL) Miller (MI) Miller, Gary Mullin Mulvaney Murphy (PA) Neugebauer Noem Nugent Nunes Nunnelee Olson Palazzo Paulsen Pearce Perrv Petri Pittenger Pitts Poe (TX) Pompeo Posey Price (GA) Radel Reed Reichert Renacci Ribble Rice (SC) Rigell Roby Roe (TN) Rogers (AL) Rogers (KY) Rogers (MI) Rohrabacher Rokita Rooney Ros-Lehtinen

Roskam

Ross Rothfus

Lummis

Royce Runyan Ryan (WI) Salmon Sanford Scalise Schock Schweikert Scott, Austin Sensenbrenner Sessions Shimkus Shuster Simpson Smith (MO) Smith (NE)

Culberson

Stivers Stockman Stutzman Terry Thompson (PA) Thornberry Tiberi Tipton Turner Upton Valadao Wagner NOT VOTING-9 Campbell

Walden Walorski Weber (TX) Webster (FL) Westmoreland Whitfield Williams Wilson (SC) Wittman Wolf Womack Woodall Yoho Young (IN) Rush

Walberg

Herrera Beutler Jones McCarthy (NY) Franks (AZ)

Wenstrup Young (AK)

 \sqcap 1716

Mr. BACHUS changed his vote from "vea" to "nav."

So the motion to recommit was reiected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 221, noes 199, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 579]

AYES-221

Aderholt DeSantis Hurt Amash Des Jarlais Issa. Diaz-Balart Amodei Jenkins Bachmann Duffy Johnson (OH) Duncan (SC) Bachus Johnson Sam Duncan (TN) Barletta Jordan Ellmers Joyce Kelly (PA) Barr Farenthold Barton Benishek Fincher King (IA) Bentivolio Fitzpatrick King (NY) Bilirakis Fleischmann Kingston Bishop (UT) Fleming Kinzinger (IL) Black Blackburn Flores Kline Labrador Forbes Boustany Fortenberry LaMalfa Brady (TX) Foxx Lamborn Frelinghuysen Bridenstine Lance Lankford Brooks (AL) Gardner Brooks (IN) Garrett Latham Broun (GA) Gerlach Latta LoBiondo Buchanan Gibbs Gingrey (GA) Bucshon Long Burgess Gohmert Lucas Goodlatte Luetkemeyer Calvert Camp Gosar Lummis Cantor Gowdy Marchant Capito Granger Marino Graves (GA) Carter Massie Cassidy Graves (MO) Matheson Chabot Griffin (AR) McCarthy (CA) Chaffetz Griffith (VA) McCaul Coble Guthrie McClintock Coffman Hall McHenry Hanna Cole McIntyre Collins (GA) Harper McKeon Collins (NY) Harris McMorris Conaway Hartzler Rodgers Hastings (WA) Costa Meadows Cotton Heck (NV) Meehan Cramer Hensarling Messer Crawford Holding Mica

Hudson

Huelskamp

Hultgren

Hunter

Huizenga (MI)

Crenshaw

Davis, Rodney

Cuellar

Denham

Dent

Neugebauer Noem Nugent Nunes Nunnelee Olson Palazzo Paulsen Pearce Perry Petri Pittenger Pitts Pompeo Posey Price (GA) Rade1 Reed Reichert Renacci Ribble Rice (SC) Rigell Roby Roe (TN) Rogers (AL) Rogers (KY)

Andrews

Barrow (GA)

Barber

Beatty

Becerra

Bera (CA)

Bishop (GA)

Bishop (NY)

Blumenauer

Bonamici

Brady (PA)

Bralev (IA)

Brown (FL)

Butterfield

Bustos

Capps

Capuano

Cárdenas

Carson (IN)

Cartwright

Castor (FL)

Castro (TX)

Cicilline

Clarke

Cleaver

Clyburn

Connolly

Conyers

Cook

Cooper

Courtney

Cummings

Davis (CA)

Davis, Danny

Crowley

Daines

DeFazio

DeGette

Delanev

DeLauro

DelBene

Deutch

Dingell

Doggett

Edwards

Ellison

Envart

Eshoo

Esty

Farr

Fattah

Fudge

Gabbard

Gallego

Garcia

Gibson

Garamendi

Miller (FL)

Miller (MI)

Mullin

Mulvaney

Miller, Gary

Foster Frankel (FL)

Engel

Duckworth

Doyle

Cohen

Clay

Carney

Chu

Brownley (CA)

Bass

Murphy (PA)

Rokita Rooney Ros-Lehtinen Roskam Ross Rothfus Rovce Runvan Ryan (WI) Salmon Sanford Scalise Schock Schrader Schweikert Scott, Austin Sensenbrenner Sessions Shimkus Shuster Simpson Smith (MO) Smith (NE) Smith (NJ) Smith (TX) Southerland NOES-199

Rogers (MI)

Rohrabacher

Stivers Stockman Stutzman Thompson (PA) Thornberry Tiberi Tipton Turner Upton Valadao Wagner Walberg Walden Walorski Weber (TX) Webster (FL) Westmoreland Whitfield Williams Wilson (SC) Wittman Wolf Womack Woodall Yoder Yoho Young (IN)

Negrete McLeod

Nolan

Grayson Green, Al Green, Gene Grijalya Grimm Gutiérrez Hahn Hanabusa Hastings (FL) Heck (WA) Higgins Himes Hinoiosa Holt Honda Horsford Hoyer Huffman Israel Jackson Lee Jeffries. Johnson (GA) Johnson, E. B. Kaptur Keating Kelly (IL) Kennedy Kildee Kilmer Kind Kirkpatrick Kuster Langevin Larsen (WA) Larson (CT) Lee (CA) Levin Lewis Lipinski Loebsack Lofgren Lowenthal Lowey Lujan Grisham (NM) Luján, Ben Ray (NM) Lynch Maffei Maloney. Carolyn Maloney, Sean Matsui McCollum McDermott

McGovern

McKinley

McNerney

Meeks

Meng

Moore

Moran

Nadler

Neal

Michaud

Miller, George

Murphy (FL)

Napolitano

O'Rourke Owens Pallone Pascrell Pastor (AZ) Payne Pelosi Perlmutter Peters (CA) Peters (MI) Pingree (ME) Pocan Poe (TX) Polis Price (NC) Quigley Rahall Rangel Richmond Roybal-Allard Ruiz Ruppersberger Ryan (OH) Sånchez, Linda т Sanchez, Loretta Sarbanes Schakowsky Schiff Schneider Schwartz Scott (VA) Scott, David Serrano Sewell (AL) Shea-Porter Sherman Sinema Sires Slaughter Smith (WA) Speier Swalwell (CA) Takano Terry Thompson (CA) Thompson (MS) Tierney Titus Tonko Tsongas Van Hollen Vargas Veasey Vela Velázquez Visclosky Walz

Wasserman

Schultz

Wilson (FL)

Yarmuth

Waters

Waxman

Welch

Watt

NOT VOTING-10

Campbell Jones Wenstrup
Culberson McCarthy (NY) Young (AK)
Franks (AZ) Peterson
Herrera Beutler Rush

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1726

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

SUPPORTING THE RIGHT TO COUNSEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and agreeing 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 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 agree to the resolution, as amended.

The question was taken; and (twothirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1730

PASS THE KEEP YOUR HEALTH PLAN ACT

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, Midge, one of the women I represent from Alexander County, wrote me to say:

I am one of the many . . . policy holders whose policy was canceled due to ObamaCare mandates.

My policy was great, affordable, and I liked it. The most similar policy Blue Cross can put me on has higher deductibles, higher coinsurance, and coverage that I don't need.

For this new coverage, Midge and her husband are going to have to pay 81 percent more. Midge closed off her letter to me with this simple request:

Please do all you can to help us be able to keep the plan we like as we were promised by our President. Letters like Midge's are pouring in from across the country to Democrats and Republicans alike. That is because promises aren't partisan issues, and promises matter to the American people.

Let's require the President to keep this central ObamaCare promise by passing the Keep Your Health Plan Act.

RECOGNIZING THE SPIRIT OF THE AMERICAN FARMER

(Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the spirit of the American farmer.

A 31-year-old farmer from Hammond, Illinois, tragically succumbed to cancer in September of this year. Kyle Hendrix was an avid golfer, farmer, and family man who left behind a wife and two young children.

His untimely passing brought out the best in his rural Piatt County community. In the middle of the harvest season, his friends and family organized a tribute of over 60 tractors and other pieces of farming equipment that lined up along Bement Road to honor Kyle's life. And all of the equipment, worth millions of dollars, had the keys left in the ignition overnight without a single worry

Thanks to the photographer, Matt Rubel, who captured the moment, the story has now gone viral. Matt said:

It seems to me that farming communities all over the country may still hold the key to what makes this country a shining beacon in a world of trouble.

Matt, I agree. This rural community story is a tribute to rural American values.

My thoughts and prayers go out to Kyle's family and friends, and may God grant him favor.

PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRIDENSTINE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, in the midst of all of our difficult debates that are occurring in this body and throughout Washington, whether it is about the right type of health care reform or how to stop the ever-expanding Federal debt which threatens both our economic as well as national security, and as important as these debates are, it should not be lost on us, though, that there is a grave struggle for the protection of a fundamental proposition of human dignity and a basis for civilization itself. This is the protection of the rights of conscience and religious freedom.

Even in the midst of all of our other debates, many Americans are concerned about the heart-wrenching stories of individuals who have been detained, condemned, incarcerated, often tortured, sometimes for years, throughout the world, even under the sentence of death for some, simply for the peaceful exercise of their religious rights.

Mr. Speaker, given the scale of human suffering endured and extensively documented in this past century alone, it is often difficult to grasp that humanity, in the 21st century, with all of its technological advances at our disposal, has not yet learned some very basic lessons.

These lessons of the 20th century, after two horrific world wars and other unspeakable human tragedies, including the Holocaust and the slaughter of tens of millions of persons under the repressive and cruel Communist regimes, should not be lost. They are indispensable in pressing forward toward a more hopeful future, one based upon the unchanging principles that underlie a free and noble society.

One of these basic lessons is that religious freedom is a foundation for social stability, security, civility, as well as economic prosperity, because it is built upon a foundation of respect for human dignity. Mr. Speaker, this is why we should, this body and the administration, we should all redouble our efforts to ensure that that first principle of religious liberty is integrated as a critical element of American foreign policy generally, and is prioritized in the day-to-day work of the diplomacy of this country.

With our position of Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom now being vacant, we should act quickly to quell any potential sense of ambiguity about where the United States stands on this important issue.

Let me first make an important distinction, Mr. Speaker: Religious freedom is not the same as freedom to worship, which is a much more restrictive concept and should not be confused. We are not merely concerned about allowing people to worship, think freely in their own minds or in their own home or in their own church, but about championing the free exercise of religion, grounded in human dignity, in its fullness, robustly, in the public square, as is guaranteed by our own Constitution in the First Amendment.

Religious freedom, the cornerstone of our civil society, is something that we can actually still take for granted, though, in the United States; although, this freedom has been eroding here in recent years. It is a painful irony that our own Department of Health and Human Services is mired in litigation over challenges to fundamental laws and basic standards of religious freedom in health care policy. Even here, this right is fragile.

So think of the many people throughout the world, in countries where the precepts of religious liberty are routinely and often egregiously violated