

means lower lifelong earnings, not only for workers but also for their children. It means a loss of dignity that is impossible to quantify.

Madam Speaker, today with nearly 30 million Americans either unemployed or underemployed, we have a moral obligation to solve the crisis. Unemployment is rampant in both red States and blue States. Creating jobs means creating dignity.

We have bipartisan options to build a full-employment society, including proposals to spur public-private investments in infrastructure and close the skills gap, but we must act now.

The mantra of this Congress should be, could be, and must be jobs, jobs, jobs.

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2013

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 470 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 470

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as 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 in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield my-

self such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Madam Speaker, I want to apologize for being 2 minutes late to come here. I apologize to not only you but also the staff and my friends from the Rules Committee for being late.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, House Resolution 470 provides for a structured rule for consideration of H.R. 3590. This rule makes in order 11 amendments which provide for discussion and opportunities for Members of the minority and the majority to participate in this debate.

Yesterday in the Rules Committee, we held what I consider to be an open discussion about this bill where amendments were fully discussed and debated, and I am pleased to say that there will be these 11 amendments as a result of the action by the Rules Committee.

Madam Speaker, the bill before us today represents a yearlong bipartisan, bicameral legislative process to protect our public lands and to preserve traditional hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting for American sportsmen and sportswomen.

Specifically, H.R. 3590 improves access to Federal lands for hunting and fishing. It protects Second Amendment rights enshrined by the Constitution of the United States and promotes sportsmen's views by giving them a seat at the table through an innovative advisory committee to collaborate with the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture on ways to better conserve wildlife, habitat, and traditional outdoor activities.

American sportsmen are some of the strongest stewards of our Nation's unparalleled natural resources. We have an abundance of natural resources, but they all must be in a protected and stewardship role, and that is what the American hunter does for this country. They direct conservation projects. They establish nonprofit organizations to protect wildlife and precious habitat. Sportsmen are leading advocates to ensure that we leave a stronger, more vibrant America for future generations, and, I might add, we teach our children and the next generation the same so that the legacy that we leave is preserved for our future.

Additionally, according to the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, American sportsmen contribute roughly \$90 billion in economic activity every year. These resources sustain thousands of American jobs and protect our Nation's rich outdoor herit-

age. They also provide many of our rural areas of this country with needed jobs, jobs for people who live in rural areas who care very much about conservation and of their local areas to keep them natural.

Unfortunately, all too often the Federal Government erects unnecessary barriers which prevent Americans from participating in the many activities that also should be available on Federal lands. That is why H.R. 3590 is important. It streamlines government regulations to allow for greater access to our Nation's public lands so that all Americans can enjoy everything that our great outdoors have to offer.

As a sportsman myself, I will tell you I have enjoyed our national parks. I have enjoyed State parks and the outdoors, and in particular, as a young Boy Scout growing up all of the way through being an Eagle Scout and an adult leader, I have utilized these resources, which has allowed me an opportunity to know more about America and to be able to pass it on to my sons and others. It is a great way to spend an afternoon or a weekend or a week with your family, the outdoors and learning more about America.

Today I want to thank the Natural Resources Committee Chairman DOC HASTINGS, who is from Washington. He understands the West, and he understands the outdoors. His leadership on this issue was essential, as well as that of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus cochairmen BOB LATTA from Ohio and BENNIE THOMPSON from Mississippi. Both of these men met with me and the committee early on to make sure that we would be prepared for their bills that would come to the floor as a package, with the understanding that on a bicameral, bipartisan basis, we would move this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule and "yes" on the underlying legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the chairman of the Rules Committee, Mr. SESSIONS, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I rise today in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, this bill is a solution in search of a problem. It is an omnibus bill that has been cobbled together in a back room by the Republican leadership. While the Resources Committee has considered some of these bills, not every bill made it through the committee process. In fact, two of the measures in this bill were never reported out of committee, and no committee considered this omnibus bill. So much for regular order.

Madam Speaker, we have a number of major time-sensitive issues that we should be tackling here in this Congress. We should be extending unemployment benefits for the 1.6 million Americans whose benefits expired on December 28, and the 72,000 more who lose them each week we fail to act. We

should be raising the minimum wage to help the too many Americans who work two jobs and still struggle to make ends meet. We should be finding common ground on comprehensive immigration reform to finally fix our broken immigration system. We should be bringing to the floor a clean bill to raise the debt ceiling, which yesterday Treasury Secretary Lew said we will hit by the end of the month. Defaulting on our national debt risks another downgrade of our credit rating. But we are not considering any of those items today.

Instead, we have before us another cobbled-together lands bill that goes much further than just expanding hunting and fishing opportunities on public lands. It undermines a number of commonsense, longstanding environmental laws that protect the beautiful lands that outdoor enthusiasts love, and it is loaded up with an array of unrelated provisions, like making it easier to import polar bear trophies.

Madam Speaker, let me remind my colleagues that 75 percent of all Federal lands are open to recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting. There are ample opportunities for hunters and fishermen to pursue these recreational activities, and H.R. 3590 effectively overrides several important, commonsense conservation laws, and elevates hunting and shooting ahead of all other legitimate uses of land. It does so without including several important bipartisan reauthorizations sought by outdoor sportsmen and -women and conservation groups.

Not only is the underlying bill bad policy, the process of bringing this bill is lousy. Despite the fact that this omnibus bill wasn't considered by any committee, the Rules Committee decided to close down the amendment process. The truth is that this rule makes in order every single Republican amendment, while only making in order one-third of the Democratic amendments. So much for openness and so much for fairness, Madam Speaker.

I am particularly disappointed that last night the Rules Committee failed to make in order an amendment that I was proud to offer with the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) and several other of my colleagues that would have reauthorized the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund program uses royalties from oil and gas drilling to protect and preserve access to Federal and State lands. The stateside program has been especially important to the creation of parks and recreational facilities in my home State of Massachusetts. The Holt amendment reauthorizing LWCF is critical. This program will expire soon, and it needs to be reauthorized. The Holt amendment is germane and does not require any waivers, yet the Republican leadership blocked it, along with two-thirds of the amendments offered by the Democrats.

□ 1230

Madam Speaker, H.R. 3590 is a bill in search of a problem. We saw a similar package last year that went nowhere in the Senate. I expect a similar fate for this year's version, because gutting environmental laws is a nonstarter for so many Members.

Madam Speaker, we should be focusing our time on the real challenges facing our economy. We should be extending unemployment insurance. It is unconscionable that we are just sitting here doing things like this, things that are going nowhere, while so many of our fellow Americans have lost their unemployment benefits. What are they to do? These are people looking for jobs and can't find them. We should be raising the minimum wage. We should be giving the American people a raise.

My friends on the other side of the aisle complain about all these government social programs. Well, the fact is that in the United States of America you can work full time and still earn so little that you will require things like food stamps and other government subsidies. We should stop subsidizing places like McDonald's or Walmart who don't pay their workers a livable wage.

We should raise the minimum wage. If you work in this country and you work full time, you ought not to have to live in poverty. We should fix our broken immigration system. We should also pass a clean extension of the debt ceiling so that we don't ruin this economy. These are the things we should be talking about. These are the things we should be debating. Those are the priorities facing our country and we are doing nothing. So, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this rule and on the underlying bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I appreciate the gentleman from Massachusetts in not only his arguments, many of which were made in the Rules Committee last night as we properly went through, I believe rather meticulously, in answers to what the gentleman brought up. It is important to note that three Democrat amendments were withdrawn. One Democrat amendment was not germane, and several other Democrat amendments I think we effectively said they will be tackled either in another piece of legislation or, because they are a larger bill that needs to be heard by the committee, updated. And, in fact, the land bill is set to be done next year, 2015, with its expiration. The chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Washington, DOC HASTINGS, very meticulously covered his thoughts and ideas about that. And he told the Rules Committee that, in fact, he did believe that it would need to be updated on a bipartisan basis.

DOC HASTINGS, as the chairman, also stated that the majority of his bills that he had brought to the committee,

at least under his chairmanship, were done on a bipartisan basis, where there was an agreement within the committee to move the bills, and while there may be disagreements about all the parts of the legislation, that they garnered respect from each other out of their committee. It was not the Republican leadership. In fact, it was the Rules Committee that made the decision based upon testimony that they heard upstairs, listening to the committee chairman, understanding the committee's thoughts and ideas, and then moving appropriately.

The gentleman from Massachusetts does make other points about jobs bills. And I would point to a Congressional Budget Office, nonpartisan CBO report that came out today that talks about the effects of a new update about the Affordable Care Act, which is known, as President Obama alluded to here, as *ObamaCare*. The word "*ObamaCare*," when used in that context, will push the equivalent of about 2 million American workers out of the labor market by 2017 as employees decide either to work fewer hours or to drop out altogether, according to the latest estimates from the Congressional Budget Office.

They said that there is a major jump in the nonpartisan agency's projection. It suggests that the health care law's initiatives and the incentives in it are driving business and people to choose government-sponsored benefits rather than work.

CBO estimates that the ACA will reduce the total number of hours worked, on net, by about 1.5 to 2 percent during the period from 2017 to 2024, almost entirely because workers will choose to supply less labor—given the new taxes and other incentives they will face and the financial benefits some will receive.

CBO analysts wrote this in their new economic outlook.

They further stated that the rollout problems with the Affordable Care Act, known as the ACA, last year will mean that only some estimated 6 million people will sign up through the State-based exchanges, rather than the 7 million that the CBO had originally said would sign up.

What this means is that the laws that were passed as a result of President Obama, NANCY PELOSI being Speaker of the House, and HARRY REID being the Senate Majority Leader, they passed laws which are substantially reducing the number of people who actually work in America. There was a net some 230,000 people that lost their job this last month. The Affordable Care Act continues to be the number one reason why American businesses and small business employers do not hire more workers in this country.

The gentleman is correct that the Democrat leadership as well as ranking members from the Ways and Means Committee and the Budget Committee have approached the Rules Committee and asked for us to extend by 1.3 million people the number of people who would be extended long-term benefits.

I had a discussion with both SANDY LEVIN of the Ways and Means Committee and CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, the ranking member at the Budget Committee, and told them that the Republican Party in the House of Representatives has, since the President initiated this action and it was passed in the House, that we saw where there would be millions of people who would lose their jobs, that we would have unemployment at the numbers that we have, and that there is not one unintended consequence in this. These were well known, they were well understood. They were simply ignored by Democrats and the media as a possible probable outcome.

So I told both these gentlemen when they came to the Rules Committee that I would be very pleased to engage with them on a private basis, as a Member of Congress and them as a Member of Congress, on a way that we could add 1.3 million jobs if we were going to extend the unemployment compensation.

I believe it is immoral for this country to have as a policy extending long-term unemployment to people rather than us working on the creation of jobs. A job is the most important attribute, I believe, in a free enterprise system of a person, a family circumstance—for a husband, a wife, children when they are able at the appropriate age—to be able to have a job, to learn to take care of themselves, to be able to meet their needs, to be able to become engaged in their community and have self-respect enough to know that jobs are important.

I think too much time we have been hung up on—instead of the creation of jobs, we talk about the symptoms that are related to—unemployment and long-term unemployment. In this case, the President of the United States thoughtfully articulates the need for us to make sure we help people, but I believe he errs on the side of not pushing jobs bills, coming to the table as the President—as he said he would when he was a candidate, as he should as President—of working with Republicans and Democrats on well-understood ways that you create more jobs.

The President has chosen not to do this. It continues to be a 5-year pattern. I would note that when we had many of these same issues, or similar, when President Clinton was in office, he worked with Republicans. Granted, they were Republican ideas: balance the budget, welfare reform, cutting taxes, reducing rules and regulations. I do admit that is a complete Republican agenda. But we saw where one Democrat President joined with Republicans to work for a great opportunity for us to grow our economy, to face down other nations who were willing to not only grow their economies at our expense, but to add American workers and a brighter future for all Americans.

The Republican Party House leadership—Speaker JOHN BOEHNER and Ma-

jority Leader ERIC CANTOR—have repeatedly stood at this podium for 5 years, and we have a constant theme, and that is: let's work together, not on raising taxes, not on more rules and regulations, not on job-killing health care ideas, but, rather, initiatives that the private sector—CEOs, small business leaders—say will help them to understand better the things that they need to go employ Americans.

Instead, the Democrat majority chose to do a bill, the Affordable Care Act, that at that time more than 55 percent of Americans opposed. We were told wait until you learn about it, you are going to love this; not just read it to learn what is in it, but the longer that you have it out there, it is going to be a real attribute.

Well, let me tell you what. We are going to find out this October when, instead of 8 million Americans are going to lose their health care and have to make decisions, there are going to be 80 million people. It will be at that time, or perhaps slightly before, when the American people will understand it was one party, one group of people—they are called the Republicans—who tried to warn us, who tried to hold some 47 individual votes on individual pieces of the Affordable Care Act that ruin employment, that make taxes even higher and move jobs overseas.

This is why the Republican Party is here today moving this bill. We will be here with a water bill tomorrow on the floor, and we will continue down the pathway of showing the differences of what we are for. We are for the American worker. We are for growing jobs. We believe the GDP is an embarrassment, and we believe that unemployment is immoral and we should add jobs.

So I am going to join my colleague SANDY LEVIN and my colleague CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, and we are going to see if we can craft something that we would have on this floor. But it has got to net add over a million jobs, because that is what America needs, a real answer, not rhetoric.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

First of all, let me just say to my colleague from Texas, I think the Republican Party, and especially the Republican leadership of this House, should be ashamed of the obstructionism that has gone on to block every major initiative that this President has put forward to try to create jobs, and I think they should be ashamed of their indifference toward working families in this country.

My colleague talks about the Affordable Care Act. Millions and millions of people now have health insurance who before did not have it. That is just a fact. You may not like it, but it is a fact. Being a woman is no longer considered a preexisting condition with regard to health care. That is a fact. That is a good thing. That is a good

thing. I would like to think my Republican colleagues would cheer that. Millions of young people can stay on their parents' insurance while they are looking for a job so they have the security of health care. That is a good thing.

CBO continues to say that the Affordable Care Act will reduce our deficit and repealing it, as my Republican friends want to do, would increase the deficit. That is nuts.

I repeat. What we should be talking about on this floor is extending unemployment insurance for those who have lost it; 1.6 million people lost it on December 28 and 73,000 people have lost it each additional week that has passed. The fact that we don't have a sense of urgency to do something about that is shameful. That is what we should be talking about.

My colleagues say we should have a pay-for, notwithstanding the fact that George Bush extended long-term unemployment benefits on a number of occasions and they never asked for a pay-for. But my colleague from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) came up to the Rules Committee with a pay-for saying we would pay for it with the savings from the farm bill. My friends say, well, that is not enough. I don't know what is enough.

□ 1245

How long does this indifference have to continue?

We need to do immigration reform. We need to raise the minimum wage so that when you work in this country you don't live in poverty. With regard to the Land and Water Conservation Fund, we want to extend it for 5 years, not for a year at a time. We want to give communities an opportunity to plan—that is a good thing—and my friends have blocked that. It was germane, and my Republican friends said, no, you can't have a debate and a vote on it on the House floor.

Madam Speaker, I am going to urge that we defeat the previous question. If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 3370, the bipartisan House companion to the flood insurance premium increase relief bill, which the Senate has already passed. I also want to say to my colleagues that it is an issue we should be talking about now. That is more important than this bill that is before us and that is going nowhere.

To discuss the urgency of passing flood insurance relief, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. I would like to thank my colleague from Massachusetts for yielding the time.

I also urge all of my colleagues to vote "no" on the rule and on the previous question so that we can take up and vote on the Senate-passed bill from last week, which would provide some relief to families and businesses across America from these unconscionable increases in flood insurance rates. It

would also give us time to work on a bipartisan solution.

Madam Speaker, for the past few months, I have offered on every single piece of legislation moving through the Rules Committee to this floor an amendment that would provide some relief to families and businesses across America on the flood insurance relief.

Here is why it is important.

We are dealing with the unintended consequences of a bill that Congress passed in 2012, which people were not aware of, that was going to really suck our neighbors with these high flood insurance increases, and FEMA did not follow through on their responsibilities. So the best course of action now is to pause. Kudos to the Senate. Last week, by a broad bipartisan vote, 67 members in the Senate passed a flood bill with the input of Realtors, families, businesses, and chambers of commerce from all across the country. It is vital that the House take up this bill right away.

Let me give you a few examples from back home in the Tampa Bay Area.

Paul Page lives in Ruskin, Florida. He says:

My name is Paul Page. I am a retired, 30-percent disabled veteran living in Ruskin, Florida. I need your help now. I purchased my home in December of 2012. My flood insurance was \$1,400 per year, but thanks to the Biggert-Waters Act of 2012, my flood insurance is rising to \$5,400 a year. Please help me now.

James Smith in south Tampa owns property. His premium will go from \$2,000 per year to \$9,000 per year.

Frank and Shirley Davis in Shore Acres in St. Petersburg just listed their home for \$175,000, but they are going to have a new annual premium of \$4,000 that has now negated any chance they have of selling their home.

This is happening all across the country.

Madam Speaker, with this Republican majority, people have called it the "do-nothing Congress." They are very skeptical that the Republican-controlled Congress can respond to middle class families and provide economic relief where it is needed. Here is a chance for the Republican majority to step up and address a very severe economic issue for families and businesses all across this country. The longer the Republican leadership puts this off, the greater economic harm it will cause to families and businesses across America.

Vote "no" on the previous question and the rule.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I have great respect for the gentlewoman from Florida. I would like to affirm that she has come to the Rules Committee and that it is the Rules Committee that has been pondering these questions and will continue to.

The Rules Committee, as of several weeks ago, attempted to work with—on a bipartisan basis—the Financial Serv-

ices Committee, and there were not agreements that were done there on a bipartisan basis, so I think the committee of jurisdiction needs an opportunity to be able to faithfully look at it and to come up with an answer. I think a backstop would be as the Senate has done, which is simply to delay things for 4 years because of this government's inability to effectively do what they were tasked with doing.

Notwithstanding, I very much appreciate the gentlewoman and her constant comments, not just to me but also to members of the Rules Committee, in order for us to understand that we do have to come up with an answer on this. I wish today were that answer. We will continue to work at it, and I appreciate the gentlewoman very much for her continued insistence with me. I have also told one of my and her colleagues—the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS)—as well as members of the Rules Committee that, on the Republican side, we will continue to work on this, and I expect us to be successful.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I think the Rules Committee ought to stop pondering and maybe start acting.

With that, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING).

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, I heard the gentleman from Texas say—and I appreciate his intensity—that he believes it is a flawed insurance policy that is government-sponsored. If that is the case, then it should be delayed, and he is willing to shut down the government to do it. I want to talk about something that is a flawed government insurance plan that is scientifically proven to be wrong—no debate about it—and that should be delayed, too.

I have a family in my hometown of Bourne, Massachusetts, who just bought a house. They bought that house for \$240,000. They had a \$400 bill—the predecessors did—for flood insurance. They were shocked, and I was shocked: that bill has now increased to \$44,000 a year. If you take away the value of their home, in about 2 or 3 years, with the payments for flood insurance at that rate, it will be the whole value of their home.

I want to also tell you that it is a government taking, in effect, I think, to have this policy in effect because, if they go to sell that home and if someone has to get a mortgage to buy it, as most people have to do, the value of that home is going to be diminished. Someone is probably going to have to pay cash—maybe pay \$100,000 for a \$240,000 home. That is government reaching in, taking the value of their nest egg—of all of their life savings of the place they live—away from them.

Now, I said it is scientifically proven. I want to show you. I went to the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth. Their coastal study experts there—scientists, engineers—said that what FEMA did in establishing the

maps upon which these rates are based is flawed. In fact, they used the Pacific Ocean methodology on the Atlantic Ocean. That is how fundamental the flaws are.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. KEATING. There is my county in Plymouth, which I represent. By taking this through the appeals process and bringing in the study that I was able to obtain from UMass, they took the whole county of Plymouth in Massachusetts, and it now has this insurance plan delayed.

It shouldn't just be my county in Plymouth that is delayed. FEMA can't do this throughout the whole country, as there is not enough time, but it should not just be my county. It should be all of Massachusetts. It should be the Northeast. It should be all the coastal areas and all the river areas in this country. They should be treated with fairness.

All we need on this is a vote. There are now 182 cosponsors, about a third of them Republicans. Let's get it to the floor. Let's be fair. When we have scientific evidence about a flawed insurance plan, let's make sure we get a vote on it.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), the ranking member of the Committee on Financial Services.

Ms. WATERS. Thank you very much.

Madam Speaker and Members of Congress, we should not have to even debate this any further. It is outrageous that we have learned what we have learned about the failed implementation of FEMA with the Biggert-Waters plan and that we will not do something about it.

Let me just say this: I joined with Mrs. Biggert, and we tried to reform the National Flood Insurance Program. We went about it in a way that we thought would make it possible for people to be able to afford—to pay for—the National Flood Insurance Program and not in a way that would cause them to lose their homes. It passed through this House. It passed through the other body. It went out to FEMA. What did FEMA do? It did not do what we instructed it to do. First of all, we said: Have a study on affordability. The second thing we said was: Look at the way you do mapping and remap it. We encouraged them to get good data to be able to do this work.

They have failed us, and they have failed the citizens of this country. Not only have they failed the citizens of this country, but middle class people in this country—homeowners—are now about to lose their homes. A California family is facing a flood insurance premium increase from \$1,700 per year up to \$22,000 per year—an increase of over

1,100 percent. I have traveled around the country. I was down in Louisiana. We have Members across the country who are representing Florida and New York and California, on and on and on. They are begging this Congress to do something about these unintended consequences.

I was coauthor on the Biggert-Waters bill. I know what we attempted to do. These unintended consequences are just that. It should not be happening this way. This is not a partisan bill. This is a bill that has got support from Democrats and Republicans. You heard the previous speaker talk about 183 Members on this bill. The Senate passed it out with flying colors, and now it is on us. What are we going to do? Are we going to allow middle class families to lose their homes because FEMA has not done its job and has not done it correctly? Are we going to allow these families to be put out of homes that they have lived in for years because now, with these increased premiums, they can't sell them? This is unconscionable. We can do better than this. I can go on and on and tell you about the families and the letters we have received.

It is time for the House of Representatives to consider this legislation. We must address this problem now before one more family suffers from increased premiums, depressed home prices, or the inability to buy or sell their homes. Bring it to the floor. I have talked with the chairman of our committee. I would like everybody to address concerns to the chairman and get this bill to the floor so that we can help our homeowners and our constituents.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, in fact, once again, the gentlewoman from Los Angeles, I believe, represents a truth. We need to get this done.

I think the committee last year, as I recall, began a process of re-looking at it, of trying to work through this issue. It is my belief and hope—and I have told members of the committee—that I intend to stay after this, but the Financial Services Committee does have the jurisdiction, and we are looking for an answer rather quickly.

I will continue to work with the gentlewoman from Los Angeles. I will continue to work with the gentleman from Florida, Judge HASTINGS, and I will continue to work with Ms. CASTOR from Tampa on this issue. I know that my dear friend from New York, Congressman MEEKS, has spoken with me a number of times about this.

So it is my hope that the Financial Services Committee will come with a recommendation—with a piece of legislation—on a bipartisan basis so that we can address this, and we will wait until that is accomplished. That is what I have told members of the committee. That is my hope, and I will continue to be engaged in this.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, let me just say that we don't have to wait for the Financial Services Committee to act. The Rules Committee shares jurisdiction on this bill. We should bring this to the floor now.

With that, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS).

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, last week, I received hundreds of calls and emails from my constituents across the Rockaway Peninsula, Broad Channel, and Jamaica Bay in New York's Fifth Congressional District. Most had been struck hard by the devastation of Superstorm Sandy, and were eagerly hopeful that relief was finally underway with the Senate's passage of the flood insurance relief bill.

My constituents then asked: How long will it take, and when will the House pass the Senate bill? Why is the House not taking up the Senate bill, or why is it being delayed? Let's put politics aside because, if there is ever an issue that should not involve politics, it is this issue, because this storm struck Democrats and Republicans. It struck everybody—rich and poor. Everybody was affected by it. So when will we put those differences aside so that we can get something done?

□ 1300

“Why?” they ask, Madam Speaker.

It is time for us to respond to these Americans who have suffered too long and who need relief now. It is time we hear the voices of hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens who have been devastated by the unintended consequences and the botched implementation of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Act that led to dramatic increases in the cost of flood insurance. It is time that we on this side of the Capitol take up this legislation and address the problem before one more family suffers from increased premiums, depressed home prices, or the inability to sell their home.

I hope that, unlike what took place when we initially asked for relief, it is not the most extreme wing of the Republican Party that is blocking or stopping real relief for our Nation's homeowners and that we pass this important reform legislation today.

Madam Speaker, it is time that we pass the Homeowners Flood Insurance Act. It is time that we get it done. We need it done today. We need it done right now for relief for American citizens.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MURPHY).

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Madam Speaker, last week, the Senate passed a bipartisan bill to fix the National Flood Insurance Program to protect homeowners from unaffordable rate hikes. It is beyond time for the House to follow suit by passing this bipartisan bill, which will help millions of

Americans facing steep flood insurance rate increases, including thousands of residents across the Palm Beaches and Treasure Coast.

The bill includes additional funding for FEMA to redraw flood maps accurately so homeowners do not face erroneous rate hikes in my district and around the country. Any proposed rate hikes must be delayed until the affordability study gives Congress a better understanding of how unaffordable rate hikes would negatively impact the Flood Insurance Program.

I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so we can pass this bipartisan, commonsense solution that will provide much-needed relief for homeowners across America.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. I thank the ranking member.

Mr. Chairman, I appeal to you to make this an urgent issue. Urgency, I think, is very critical here. So I rise in opposition to the previous question so that we can consider the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, over 74,000 National Flood Insurance Program claims were submitted in New Jersey from policyholders. To date, the NFIP has paid over \$3.5 billion in Sandy claims. It has served as a lifeline to thousands of New Jersey residents whose lives were turned upside down by the storm. The funds paid out through those claims have helped our neighbors rebuild their homes and businesses.

Regardless of what political affiliation or persuasion, we are all affected by this. Estimates indicate that the total cost of Sandy will be between \$12 and \$15 billion, making Sandy the second-costliest flood event after Hurricane Katrina.

So, it is true that we need to make changes to ensure that NFIP remains solvent. However, the rollout of the 2012 reforms to NFIP have been fraught with issues.

I am hearing from constituents in towns such as Little Ferry and Moonachie, particularly, which were devastated by Sandy. This is destroying property values and disrupting the real estate markets in the communities of New Jersey and across the country. That is why it is so crucial that we revisit flood insurance reform by passing H.R. 3370.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. PASCRELL. I thank the gentleman.

This legislation will prevent premium rate hikes until FEMA completes the affordability study called for in the original Biggert-Waters flood insurance reform legislation, giving FEMA a chance to implement an affordability framework before implementing new rates. The bill establishes

an appeal process for remapping and creates an advocate position within FEMA.

Just last week, a bipartisan majority in the Senate did approve this bill, as you already heard. It is time to bring this vital legislation to the floor.

Again, I appeal to the chairman. This is urgent, not simply because we had two major storms in the last few years, but because Americans all over this country are affected one way or another, if not by a storm off the ocean, a snowstorm or even worse. So I ask you specifically to do what you can to put this in front of us as soon as possible.

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

I appreciate the gentleman from New Jersey, my dear friend, who joins with others of his colleagues who, in fact, most politely and appropriately have brought this issue to the Rules Committee.

I will tell you that there was an assertion made a minute ago that I was unaware of, and that was a jurisdictional issue that evidently the Rules Committee does have. I have tried to be forthright with this the whole time, and I believe it is the right thing for the men and women of the Democratic Party and the Republican Party who have approached me. I have consistently tried to invoke myself into the process with an answer, through the committee, which I thought was solely the committee of jurisdiction.

I will look at the gentleman from Massachusetts and the gentleman from New Jersey, both very dear friends, who see me every day. I am not trying to evade. I am not trying to obfuscate. I am not trying to pass the buck on this. I have indicated I will be willing to be a part of this compromise. I will look back at the gentleman, my friend, Mr. PASCRELL, and tell him I am personally involved in this. I will continue to be involved.

I am delighted that the Senate came up with their answer, which was a short-term answer, not a fix. I believe that there is a fix that is trying to be looked at right now—one which I think is more amenable to the circumstance. If that effort fails, I will continue to stay in touch with not only the ranking member of the committee, Ms. SLAUGHTER, who has pressed me also, but also with my friends who have approached me today.

I will very respectfully acknowledge that what they are doing here today in coming to the floor to do this is appreciated. What I would say to them is I don't know that voting against the rule, believing they are going to take this down, would get this process done. It is not included in the rule. But I will tell each of my friends that are here today that I am going to continue to work on this, and I intend to have an answer quickly.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. I thank my friend for yielding.

Madam Speaker, last week, the President called on Congress to embark on a year of action—one in which we all work together to put opportunity and financial security within the grasp of America's families.

Just a few days later, the Senate took bipartisan action to protect thousands of homeowners in my home State of Florida and across the country from massive premium hikes on their flood insurance. These hikes are breaking the backs of America's families. They are bringing down home values at a time when our housing market is just starting to pick up again.

There is no question that the financial health of the thousands of families who could lose their homes as a result of these premium rate increases has to be an urgent priority of this House. Rather than gutting environmental protections, let's focus on the concerns of real homeowners. Let's pass the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act so that FEMA can reform the flood insurance program and protect America's families at the same time.

It is urgent that we move forward. I thank the gentleman for making this an urgent priority. The way to do this is to proceed with this today.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act overwhelmingly passed the Senate with bipartisan support. It needs to pass the House of Representatives. We need to stabilize flood insurance rates before families are further impacted by FEMA's poor implementation, inaccurate mapping, and incomplete data, which has led to unimaginable increases in premiums.

We came together on a bipartisan basis in 2012 to reform the National Flood Insurance Program and put it on a path to stability, but Congress never intended to allow the punitive flood insurance premiums FEMA is now imposing on homeowners.

A constituent of mine from Milford, Connecticut, anticipates paying a rate as much as 5,000 percent higher than he was paying. And yes, I have heard from many constituents. The Senate legislation would delay these increases until FEMA completes the study ensuring that new rates are affordable for families, as was called for in the 2012 law.

182 Members of this body, Republicans and Democrats, support a similar bill. We can get this done. We need to get this done. And we can do it today. I call on the Speaker to stop fiddling while Rome burns.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ENYART).

Mr. ENYART. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to bring the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act up for a vote.

It is crucial that we fix the critical problems created by the rushed implementation of the Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012. We cannot ensure the National Flood Insurance Program's long-term viability at the expense of homeowners and potential buyers.

Opponents of the Senate-passed flood insurance bill say that it overwhelmingly benefits wealthy Americans who buy beachfront property. I urge those opponents to come to my southern Illinois district. My district borders more than 150 miles on the mighty Mississippi. The folks who live there are not owners of second homes or vacation rentals, but are middle class families in Jackson, Union, and Alexander Counties, and in the American Bottom in the Metro-East St. Louis area.

Without reform, people in my district and across the U.S. will see their property values plummet. Many of these properties have been family homes for generations and have never once endured flooding.

I urge that we pass this act now.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, at this time I am proud to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND), a cosponsor of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

Mr. RICHMOND. Madam Speaker, I will take Mr. SESSIONS at his word, and I believe him to be sincere and genuine in his desire to see this problem fixed.

I would just remind Mr. SESSIONS and Congress that we don't have time to wait on this issue. Every day, there is a sale that is delayed or a sale that doesn't go through because the flood insurance is so high and the new purchaser doesn't want to pay for it. And every day, there is an owner short-selling a house because they have to get out of it, and they can't afford to wait.

So, when we talk about home ownership, we are talking about responsible Americans. We are talking about 1.7 million people in this country that saved up to participate in the bedrock of the American Dream. And now, government and FEMA and Congress are turning a piece of the American Dream into a government-made nightmare, and we have the ability here today to fix this.

Right now, we are not asking for politics. We are not trying to be overdramatic. We are just asking for a solution. We want to fix it. In fact, we are here today talking about a Republican bill that solves the problem. That is because, for me, this is not about politics. It is about people. It is about purpose. It is not about making sure that rich people who own riverfront, lakefront, or oceanfront property are taken

care of. It is about our seniors who want a home on Main Street or smack dab in our communities. They saved. They sacrificed. They did everything right. They played by all the rules. And now FEMA has come and decided they are going to create new flood maps.

The sad part about it is, if you are a community and you built levees and increased flood protection and you did it with your own money, FEMA does not even count it, because they didn't pay for it. So communities have saved money to help themselves, like we do in America. If we have a problem, we fix it. My community, which put up millions of dollars to build levees, doesn't even get that recognized because the government didn't pay for it.

Madam Speaker, I would just ask all my colleagues, let's do what is right. Let's help people, and let's put people over politics.

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

The gentleman from Louisiana is most accurate when he describes the problems which are associated with the way FEMA has initiated this process.

□ 1315

I will not sit here and beat anyone up over what they did or did not do. I recognize that I have disagreements myself. I have disagreements with myself, as a Member of Congress from Dallas, Texas.

What I would say to the gentleman—and he is sitting right next to the ranking member of the Financial Services Committee—these are issues that have to be resolved, and they are larger, I believe.

What you have heard me say today, I think they are trying to look at solving more than just the extension problem. They are trying to solve some problems. I could be wrong about that. I am not in the negotiation; I am around the negotiation.

But the gentleman, most assuredly, has come to the floor today for the right reason, I believe, with a pretty good message. Everybody is impacted that lives in these areas. We don't need to say one group of people or another or people that live in high-rises or low-rises.

What we do need to say is—and acknowledge, and I do—that each of my colleagues—I have been approached by colleagues on the Republican side and the Democrat side. I intend to stay after this issue, and I respect the gentleman for the way he approached it today, and I owe him. I am looking at him right in the eye. I owe him an answer on this too. I am part of the problem, just as he is, and we have got to find a solution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL).

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Madam Speaker, we have a crisis, a crisis in

Florida and across this Nation where our constituents are facing skyrocketing jumps in flood insurance premiums, making homeownership unaffordable.

Madam Speaker, floods are not partisan, and homeownership makes communities safer, more secure, and more economically vibrant.

Madam Speaker, let's fix this crisis now.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH), my colleague.

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise today to urge a “no” vote on the previous question so this House can bring the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act up for a vote.

This bipartisan legislation will provide critical relief for families who have been devastated by outrageous flood insurance increases required by recent changes to the Flood Insurance Program.

FEMA's insistence on moving forward with these extreme rate hikes, without first completing an affordability study and certifying that their mapping techniques are accurate, as required by Congress in the Biggert-Waters Act, has created a crisis for working families who can't afford to pay 5 or 10 times more for flood insurance.

Before we ask the American taxpayer to pay 1 cent more in premiums, we need to ensure that FEMA is implementing the Flood Insurance Program in a fair and lawful way.

Now, we are not asking to repeal that law. We are just asking for a timeout while we figure this out, and we are asking that we do an affordability study so that we don't force people out of their homes. There is no sense doing it after the people are gone. We need this done in the right way.

We can help middle class homeowners across the country by voting “no” on the previous question and bringing up the Homeowner Protection Act.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, I am here with the ranking member of the Financial Services Committee. She and I represent a city built in the desert suffering from a drought. We interrupted our rain prayer meeting to come here and to talk about how flood insurance is critical to the national interest.

We should not burden our economy with a situation in which people can't buy their home, sell a home, live in their home. It is time for us to defeat the previous question motion and take up on the floor of this House a bill that

had overwhelming bipartisan support in the Senate, that has 182 cosponsors here in the House.

It is time to stop partisan wrangling and deal with bipartisan legislation critical to homeowners from one coast to the other, and yes, a few in Los Angeles as well.

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

Madam Speaker, with great respect to the gentleman, I would, once again, offer an explanation, and that is that what they are talking about with this motion to recommit is not germane to the bill and would not go back to the committee of jurisdiction and so, by voting against what would be the rule or for a motion to recommit, would not accomplish what the gentleman is trying to do.

That is why I have tried to take, Madam Speaker, as I have tried meticulously, with speaker after speaker, my friends, my colleagues that have a strong opinion about this, I have tried to say to them that I do recognize that, while I don't believe I have the jurisdictional elements within the Rules Committee, that I will continue to work on this, and believe that there can be an answer.

So I would respond back to the gentleman from Los Angeles and tell him, thank you for coming to the floor, but an answer for this really needs to come from the committee, that we need to then work through the Rules Committee and get it on the floor. I am committed to that entire process and will continue to do that.

I thank the gentleman from Los Angeles, my friend, for him taking time to come down, but I don't want him to believe that, by winning a vote on the motion to recommit, that it will have any impact on that endeavor.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I will ask the gentleman if he has any other speakers.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the gentleman. I have no further requests for speakers either.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, first of all, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Again, I urge all my colleagues to vote “no” and defeat the previous question.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the chairman of the Rules Committee expressing his willingness to ponder and reflect and consider and contemplate and speculate on this legislation. But, look, time is of the essence here.

If the House votes to defeat the previous question, you know, we can bring this up. There is no reason why we can't bring this up. The Rules Committee has jurisdiction over this issue too, and if there are any glitches here, quite frankly, the Rules Committee can meet immediately and waive all the rules, because that is what my friends do on so many other bills.

One of the frustrations that we have on our side of the aisle is that my friends in the majority keep on bringing bills to the floor that mean nothing, that are going nowhere.

This issue of flood insurance is a big deal. You have heard from Members from all across the country. They want action now, not sometime in the future. They want it now. By voting to defeat the previous question, we can bring this up, we can deal with this, we can actually help some people in this country for a change and do the right thing.

So I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question, and if they don't defeat the previous question, defeat the rule.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I will, once again, do the very best that I can and, with great respect and appreciation to my very dear friend from Massachusetts—who has been a part of, since I recall at least early December, the discussion in the Rules Committee with the gentleman, his colleague, my colleague, from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS)—Judge HASTINGS pushed this issue appropriately. The members of the committee from Florida have graciously pushed that issue forward.

The bottom line is that I believe the gentleman and I need to meet to speak about the jurisdiction that he refers to. The jurisdiction that I believe that the Rules Committee has is not related to the policy. The policy, which is what the provisions that are contained within the problems that we are talking about today, the policy issues are within the jurisdiction of the Financial Services Committee.

Today, we are on the floor of the House of Representatives with a rule with the jurisdiction to the Natural Resources Committee. The motion to recommit is not germane to the Natural Resources Committee.

So voting, or believing that you could, through a motion to recommit, winning that, and getting this bill on the floor through the previous question is simply not something that I believe is realistic, or something that we should even suggest to people that would happen.

What we are talking about today is a bill with the jurisdiction through the Natural Resources Committee, and I would like to confine my remarks now on the bill that is before the House.

Madam Speaker, I have had the pleasure of growing up as a lifelong

Texan but had the opportunity to visit and live in other States in our great United States.

I have had an opportunity to visit national parks, national lands, land that is owned by all the American people. As an active Eagle Scout, and the father of two Eagle Scouts—and my father is an Eagle Scout—we have been in national parks all over this country.

That is what this legislation is about today. It is about national parks and the use therein. Some number of bills that have been cobbled together, yes, they were cobbled together so that we could come up with a policy, a policy that is trying to be worked on through a group of men and women here in the United States House of Representatives on a bipartisan basis, as well as a bicameral basis.

We had an understanding that we would try and do this about this week early last year. So I want you to know that what we are doing is bringing forth a bill which is important to people in how they deal with their families' recreation, as well as the importance of vital economic help to various areas of the United States.

I have witnessed the educational and recreational opportunities that we are talking about today, and they possess near limitless opportunities for not only my generation but the next generation of Americans who want to enjoy America.

I think that we, today, by this bill, have given us a refreshed new opportunity, on a bipartisan, bicameral basis, to address that issue. That is why I support increasing access to public lands for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting, so others may have this same opportunity.

So I am a "yes" and would encourage my colleagues to be "yes" on what the legislation is about today, not something that is not germane and another issue, which I have tried to appropriately address here today. It is urgent, but that is not what we are doing right here right now.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule, "yes" on the underlying legislation, and to be a part of moving this bill to the Senate, then on to the President's desk.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 470 OFFERED BY
MR. MCGOVERN OF MASSACHUSETTS

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

SEC. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services. After gen-

eral debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3370.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution. . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee

on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.” (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: “Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.”

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority’s agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of this resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 225, nays 193, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 34]

YEAS—225

Aderholt	Diaz-Balart	Jenkins
Amash	Duffy	Johnson (OH)
Bachmann	Duncan (SC)	Johnson, Sam
Bachus	Duncan (TN)	Jordan
Barletta	Ellmers	Joyce
Barr	Farenthold	Kelly (PA)
Barton	Fincher	King (IA)
Benishek	Fitzpatrick	King (NY)
Bentivolio	Fleischmann	Kingston
Bilirakis	Fleming	Kinzinger (IL)
Bishop (UT)	Flores	Kline
Black	Forbes	Labrador
Blackburn	Fortenberry	LaMalfa
Boustany	Fox	Lamborn
Brady (TX)	Franks (AZ)	Lance
Bridenstine	Frelinghuysen	Lankford
Brooks (AL)	Gardner	Latham
Brooks (IN)	Garrett	Latta
Broun (GA)	Gerlach	LoBiondo
Buchanan	Gibbs	Long
Buchanan	Gibson	Lucas
Burgess	Gingrey (GA)	Luetkemeyer
Byrne	Gohmert	Lummis
Calvert	Goodlatte	Marchant
Camp	Gowdy	Marino
Campbell	Granger	Massie
Cantor	Graves (GA)	McAllister
Capito	Graves (MO)	McCarthy (CA)
Carter	Griffin (AR)	McCaul
Chabot	Griffith (VA)	McClintock
Chaffetz	Grimm	McHenry
Coble	Guthrie	McKeon
Coffman	Hall	McKinley
Cole	Hanna	McMorris
Collins (GA)	Harper	Rodgers
Collins (NY)	Harris	Meadows
Conaway	Hartzler	Meehan
Cook	Hastings (WA)	Messer
Cotton	Heck (NV)	Mica
Cramer	Hensarling	Miller (FL)
Crawford	Herrera Beutler	Miller (MI)
Crenshaw	Holding	Mullin
Culberson	Hudson	Mulvaney
Daines	Huelskamp	Murphy (PA)
Davis, Rodney	Huizenga (MI)	Neugebauer
Denham	Hultgren	Noem
Dent	Hunter	Nugent
DeSantis	Hurt	Nunes
DesJarlais	Issa	Nunnelee

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

NAYS—193

Barber	Grayson	Negrete McLeod
Barrow (GA)	Green, Al	Nolan
Bass	Green, Gene	O'Rourke
Beatty	Grijalva	Owens
Becerra	Gutiérrez	Pallone
Bera (CA)	Hahn	Pascarella
Bishop (NY)	Hanabusa	Pastor (AZ)
Blumenauer	Hastings (FL)	Payne
Bonamici	Heck (WA)	Pelosi
Brady (PA)	Higgins	Perlmutter
Braley (IA)	Himes	Peters (CA)
Brown (FL)	Hinojosa	Peters (MI)
Brownley (CA)	Holt	Peterson
Bustos	Honda	Pingree (ME)
Butterfield	Horsford	Pocan
Capps	Hoyer	Polis
Capuano	Huffman	Price (NC)
Cárdenas	Israel	Quigley
Carney	Jackson Lee	Rahall
Carson (IN)	Jeffries	Rangel
Cartwright	Johnson, E. B.	Richmond
Castor (FL)	Jones	Roybal-Allard
Castro (TX)	Kaptur	Ruiz
Chu	Keating	Ruppersberger
Cicilline	Kelly (IL)	Ryan (OH)
Clark (MA)	Kennedy	Sánchez, Linda
Clarke (NY)	Kildee	T.
Clay	Kilmer	Sanchez, Loretta
Cleaver	Kind	Sarbanes
Clyburn	Kirkpatrick	Schakowsky
Cohen	Kuster	Schiff
Connolly	Langevin	Schneider
Conyers	Larsen (WA)	Schrader
Cooper	Larson (CT)	Scott (VA)
Costa	Lee (CA)	Scott, David
Courtney	Levin	Serrano
Crowley	Lewis	Sewell (AL)
Cuellar	Lipinski	Shea-Porter
Cummings	Loeb sack	Sherman
Davis (CA)	Lofgren	Sinema
Davis, Danny	Lowenthal	Sires
DeFazio	Lowe	Slaughter
DeGette	Luján, Ben Ray	Speier
Delaney	(NM)	Swalwell (CA)
DeLauro	Lynch	Takano
DelBene	Maffei	Thompson (CA)
Deutch	Maloney,	Thompson (MS)
Dingell	Carolyn	Tierney
Doggett	Maloney, Sean	Titus
Doyle	Matheson	Tonko
Duckworth	Matsui	Tsongas
Edwards	McCollum	Van Hollen
Ellison	McDermott	Vargas
Engel	McGovern	Veasey
Enyart	McIntyre	Vela
Eshoo	McNerney	Velázquez
Esty	Meeks	Visclosky
Farr	Meng	Walz
Fattah	Michaud	Wasserman
Foster	Miller, George	Schultz
Frankel (FL)	Moore	Waters
Fudge	Moran	Waxman
Gabbard	Murphy (FL)	Welch
Gallego	Nadler	Wilson (FL)
Garamendi	Napolitano	Yarmuth
Garcia	Neal	

NOT VOTING—13

Amodei	Bishop (GA)	Gosar
Andrews	Cassidy	Johnson (GA)

Lujan Grisham	Miller, Gary	Smith (WA)
(NM)	Rush	Stockman
McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz	

□ 1354

Mr. POLIS and Ms. HANABUSA and BASS changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam 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 234, noes 185, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 35]

AYES—234

Aderholt	Franks (AZ)	McClintock
Amash	Frelinghuysen	McHenry
Bachmann	Gardner	McIntyre
Bachus	Garrett	McKeon
Barber	Gerlach	McKinley
Barletta	Gibbs	McMorris
Barr	Gibson	Rodgers
Barton	Gingrey (GA)	Meadows
Benishek	Gohmert	Meehan
Bentivolio	Goodlatte	Messer
Bilirakis	Gowdy	Mica
Bishop (UT)	Granger	Miller (FL)
Black	Graves (GA)	Miller (MI)
Blackburn	Graves (MO)	Mullin
Boustany	Griffin (AR)	Mulvaney
Brady (TX)	Griffith (VA)	Murphy (PA)
Bridenstine	Grimm	Neugebauer
Brooks (AL)	Guthrie	Noem
Brooks (IN)	Hall	Nugent
Broun (GA)	Hanna	Nunes
Buchanan	Harper	Nunnelee
Buchanan	Harris	Olson
Burgess	Hartzler	Palazzo
Byrne	Hastings (WA)	Paulsen
Calvert	Heck (NV)	Pearce
Camp	Hensarling	Perlmutter
Campbell	Herrera Beutler	Perry
Cantor	Holding	Peterson
Capito	Hudson	Petri
Carter	Huelskamp	Pittenger
Chabot	Huizenga (MI)	Pitts
Chaffetz	Hultgren	Poe (TX)
Coble	Hunter	Pompeo
Coffman	Hurt	Posey
Cole	Issa	Price (GA)
Collins (GA)	Jenkins	Rahall
Collins (NY)	Johnson (OH)	Reed
Conaway	Johnson, Sam	Reichert
Cook	Jones	Renacci
Cotton	Jordan	Ribble
Cramer	Joyce	Rice (SC)
Crenshaw	Kelly (PA)	Rigell
Culberson	King (IA)	Roby
Daines	King (NY)	Roe (TN)
Davis, Rodney	Kingston	Rogers (AL)
Denham	Kinzinger (IL)	Rogers (KY)
Dent	Kline	Rogers (MI)
DeSantis	Labrador	Rohrabacher
DesJarlais	LaMalfa	Rokita
Diaz-Balart	Lamborn	Rooney
Duffy	Lance	Ros-Lehtinen
Duncan (SC)	Lankford	Roskam
Duncan (TN)	Latham	Ross
Ellmers	Latta	Rothfus
Enyart	LoBiondo	Royce
Farenthold	Long	Runyan
Fincher	Lucas	Ryan (WI)
Fitzpatrick	Luetkemeyer	Salmon
Fleischmann	Lummis	Sanford
Fleming	Marchant	Scalise
Flores	Marino	Schock
Forbes	Massie	Schweikert
Fortenberry	McAllister	Scott, Austin
Fox	McCarthy (CA)	Sensenbrenner
	McCaul	Sessions

Shimkus	Thornberry	Westmoreland
Shuster	Tiberi	Whitfield
Simpson	Tipton	Williams
Smith (MO)	Turner	Wilson (SC)
Smith (NE)	Upton	Wittman
Smith (NJ)	Valadao	Wolf
Smith (TX)	Wagner	Womack
Southerland	Walberg	Woodall
Stewart	Walden	Yoder
Stivers	Walorski	Yoho
Stutzman	Walz	Young (AK)
Terry	Weber (TX)	Young (IN)
Thompson (MS)	Webster (FL)	
Thompson (PA)	Wenstrup	

NOES—185

Barrow (GA)	Garcia	Nadler
Bass	Grayson	Napolitano
Beatty	Green, Al	Neal
Becerra	Green, Gene	Negrete McLeod
Bera (CA)	Grijalva	Nolan
Bishop (GA)	Gutiérrez	O'Rourke
Bishop (NY)	Hahn	Owens
Blumenauer	Hanabusa	Pallone
Bonamici	Hastings (FL)	Pascarell
Brady (PA)	Heck (WA)	Pastor (AZ)
Braley (IA)	Higgins	Payne
Brown (FL)	Himes	Pelosi
Bustos	Hinojosa	Peters (CA)
Butterfield	Holt	Peters (MI)
Capps	Honda	Pingree (ME)
Capuano	Horsford	Pocan
Cardenas	Hoyer	Polis
Carney	Huffman	Price (NC)
Carson (IN)	Israel	Quigley
Cartwright	Jackson Lee	Rangel
Castor (FL)	Jeffries	Richmond
Castro (TX)	Johnson (GA)	Roybal-Allard
Chu	Johnson, E. B.	Ruiz
Cicilline	Kaptur	Ruppersberger
Clark (MA)	Keating	Ryan (OH)
Clarke (NY)	Kelly (IL)	Sánchez, Linda
Clay	Kennedy	T.
Cleaver	Kildee	Sanchez, Loretta
Clyburn	Kilmer	Sarbanes
Cohen	Kind	Schakowsky
Connolly	Kirkpatrick	Schiff
Conyers	Kuster	Schneider
Cooper	Langevin	Schrader
Costa	Larsen (WA)	Scott (VA)
Courtney	Larson (CT)	Scott, David
Crowley	Lee (CA)	Serrano
Cuellar	Levin	Sewell (AL)
Cummings	Lewis	Shea-Porter
Davis (CA)	Lipinski	Sherman
Davis, Danny	Loeb sack	Sinema
DeFazio	Lofgren	Sires
DeGette	Lowenthal	Slaughter
Delaney	Lowe y	Speier
DeLauro	Lujan, Ben Ray	Swallowell (CA)
DeBene	(NM)	Takano
Deutch	Lynch	Thompson (CA)
Dingell	Maffei	Tierney
Doggett	Maloney,	Titus
Doyle	Carolyn	Tonko
Duckworth	Maloney, Sean	Tsongas
Edwards	Matheson	Van Hollen
Ellison	Matsui	Vargas
Engel	McCollum	Veasey
Eshoo	McDermott	Vela
Esty	McGovern	Velázquez
Farr	McNerney	Visclosky
Fattah	Meeks	Wasserman
Foster	Meng	Schultz
Frankel (FL)	Michaud	Waters
Fudge	Miller, George	Waxman
Gabbard	Moore	Welch
Galleo	Moran	Wilson (FL)
Garamendi	Murphy (FL)	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—12

Amodi	Lujan Grisham	Schwartz
Andrews	(NM)	Smith (WA)
Brownley (CA)	McCarthy (NY)	Stockman
Cassidy	Miller, Gary	
Gosar	Rush	

□ 1404

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, last night, on rollcall Nos. 32 and 33 for H.R. 1791 and H.R. 357, I am not recorded because I was absent.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on both.

Today, on rollcall Nos. 34 and 35 for the Rule on H.R. 3590 and H. Res. 470, I am not recorded because I was absent. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on both.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. 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. 3590.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 470 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. 3590.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Florida (Mr. NUGENT) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1406

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. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, with Mr. NUGENT in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFazio) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act, H.R. 3590, is a package of eight bills that protect the right of American sportsmen to fish and hunt from arbitrary and unjustified bureaucratic restrictions and limitations. It will remove government roadblocks to those activities on certain public lands and guard against new regulations that threaten hunting and fishing.

Mr. Chairman, this is a bipartisan bill. It is cosponsored by the Republican and Democrat chairs of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, Mr. LATTA of Ohio and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and the caucus vice chairs, Mr. WITTMAN of Virginia and Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. In addition, Mr. BENISHEK of Michigan, Mr. HUNTER of California, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska all deserve credit for leadership on these important issues.

This legislation ensures that Americans' ability to fish and hunt will not be arbitrarily limited by the whim of Federal bureaucrats.

Title I of this bill directly responds to bureaucratic threats posed by the EPA. In 1976, Congress barred the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, from regulating firearms and ammunition. However, this has not stopped attempts to circumvent the law by claiming that, while EPA may not be able to regulate ammunition, it can regulate components of ammunition and fishing tackle. This would be a massive power grab by the EPA despite a clear lack of legal authority.

Banning lead bullets and tackle would increase costs for hunters, sports shooters, and fishermen, and cause economic harm to outdoor sportsmen and the recreation industry. This legislation ensures that the EPA does not—does not, Mr. Chairman—have the authority to regulate ammunition and fishing tackle.

Title II of this bill makes more funding available to States for a longer period of time to create and maintain shooting ranges, which preserves American tradition.

Title III would direct the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior to allow, with a permit, commercial filming on Federal lands for crews of five or fewer. This permit would ensure a fair return to the taxpayer in exchange for use of their lands.

Title IV of this bill would allow for the importation of legally taken polar bear hunting trophies from Canada that, through no fault of the sportsmen, have become trapped in a bureaucratic limbo. This is focused squarely on resolving existing permits snarled in red tape and does not open the door to any future imports.

The next two titles of the bill would allow sportsmen across the country to more easily obtain a Federal duck stamp by making them available for purchase online and would protect law-abiding individuals' constitutional right to bear arms on lands owned by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Title VII establishes a Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee in order to protect the rights of sportsmen while finding a balance with commonsense conservation.

The last title of the bill requires Federal land managers to support and facilitate use and access for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting on Forest Service and BLM land. It protects sportsmen from arbitrary efforts by the Federal Government to block public lands from hunting and fishing activities by implementing an "open until closed" management policy. However, it does not prioritize hunting and fishing over other multiple uses of public lands.

Hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting are longstanding American traditions that deserve our protection. This important legislation is not a solution in search of a problem. Regrettably, bureaucratic threats to hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting are very real. That is why this bill has

broad bipartisan support and the endorsement of over 36 sportsmen's organizations. So I again commend the bipartisan sponsors of this package of bills, and I encourage my colleagues to support the legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

In the past, I have voted for a number of the sportsmen promotion and protection packages. Unfortunately, it seems this one, with a number of extraneous and detrimental provisions to wilderness, wildlife refuges, and other areas, seems designed to turn what in the past has been a bipartisan consensus in favor of sportsmen's issues into a partisan issue, which is what we do with most everything around here these days, and that is unfortunate because we would be happy to address real problems as they are identified.

□ 1415

In this bill, we are going to essentially amend or override the Wilderness Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the Refuge System Administration Act. These are all bedrock environmental provisions which protect public lands and wildlife and have not caused conflicts for sportsmen, hunters, fishers, and others.

Also, we have the throwaway little political thing. The EPA has already said: We don't have the authority to regulate land, and that is the end of it. But we are going to pass a law to say they don't have the authority that they don't have to regulate the land. Okay. Whatever. That is fine.

So then we also have a very broad agreement that hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-dependent activities can and should and have and will, ongoing, take place in wildlife refuges and wilderness areas. In fact, there is so much agreement on this point that existing law clearly supports such activities. As a result, hunting and fishing are popular and commonplace, pursued on public lands, the vast majority of which, outside of national parks in the lower 48, are open to hunting and fishing.

Now, reasonable legislation seeking simply to emphasize the importance of these activities would have been non-controversial, whatever minor adjustments we might need to make. But to have a blanket exemption for operations in the National Wildlife Refuge System from all environmental planning under NEPA, the purpose of such a broad waiver is unclear, the motivation is unclear. It is definitely and potentially, or at least probably, very—I can't say "definitely." But it could well undermine management in refuges in ways that will actually degrade habitat, which will mean less hunting and fishing opportunities, and degrade water, which means less hunting and fishing opportunities. That seems contradictory to the meritorious title of the bill, which doesn't seem to be reflected in the various parts, some of which have been through hearings, some of which haven't.

Now, the filming on public lands, I haven't heard of the controversy. There are some who purport that there might be some kind of problem for people who want to do hunting and fishing videos, films—I have seen quite a few of them—on public lands. There is no example of a problem that has occurred, but the new authority with a fixed rate of a maximum of \$200 for a permit, no matter how much the impact might be of the film crew, and further, to open the door for the use of motorized equipment in wilderness areas for these filming activities is very, very problematic, objectionable, and unnecessary at this point. Again, there has been nothing brought up in a hearing about a credible complaint from a film company that couldn't do its wildlife film or its hunting film because of restrictions that were placed upon them.

It also would allow the construction of temporary roads. Now, I appreciate the fact the manager's amendment is going to prohibit permanent roads within wilderness areas that are designated necessary for access to hunting and fishing, but even temporary roads in wilderness areas for hunting and fishing are a clear and unnecessary degradation, a violation, of the existing Wilderness Act. And many horseback hunters or hunters who access on foot in my State, I have never been petitioned by them to open up roads into wilderness areas so they can better hunt. They are concerned about the ongoing review and closure of roads by the Forest Service, and I have been actively involved in that.

But in this case, we are saying no. Now we can have temporary roads into wilderness areas, something that no one has ever asked me nor made a case that is necessary for hunting. So it is slightly improved from the early versions, but we are still concerned about temporary roads and that is not something we want in our wilderness areas. I don't think that weakening or changing the definition of "wilderness" helps expand access for hunting and fishing nor the opportunities in those areas.

Also, the bill has some pretty glaring omissions that actually would tremendously benefit the sportsmen's communities. That would be programs that support wetlands conservation, the preservation of outdoor recreation facilities, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, and the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which are key in expanding opportunities or protecting continued opportunities to hunt and fish as we see more and more urban encroachment onto traditional hunting and fishing areas. We could use those tools. We need those tools—they are both expired—and they are not allowed to be part of this package.

There were various other amendments offered that we will get to later in the discussion that were not allowed that could have improved this package. We will go through the amendment process and try to deal with some of

the concerns, but at this point, as written and introduced, I would urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), my colleague.

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chair, I am interested in title IV in this legislation, which is a good piece of legislation. The provision in title IV of H.R. 3590 has the support of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the President of the United States. This provision is the Polar Bear Conservation and Fairness Act. It is a bipartisan measure that would make a very limited fix to an issue that affects a number of hunters nationwide.

Prior to the threatened listing of the worldwide polar bear population on May 15, 2008, there were a number of hunters that took hunting trips to Canada under Canadian law and United States law. These hunters followed all the rules at the time and were prevented from bringing in their polar bear trophy due to the threatened listing triggering an importation ban under the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

My legislation, H.R. 3590, will allow the Secretary of the Interior to issue permits to only those qualified hunters with legally taken polar bear trophies prior to the May listing date. This legislation will allow up to 41 hunters to import their trophies from Canada.

As a result, roughly \$41,000 would be available to the United States-Russia Polar Bear Conservation Fund to support conservation activities for the shared polar bear population. This is a provision that would bring in revenue for conservation activities that otherwise would not be funded.

As a result, I urge Members to support this legislation and keep in fact these are dead polar bears in storage hunted legally under the premise of Canadian law and United States law. This is a good part of this bill.

By the way, speaking of this bill, it is a good bill. From the State of Alaska are more parks and more refuges than any other State. The Refuge Department doesn't allow us to hunt on refuges in many areas. The Park Service definitely doesn't allow us to hunt. I am arguing that the park and refuge areas are set aside for the refuge managers themselves and not for the people of America, let alone the people of Alaska.

This legislation is the right way to go. Let's think about public lands, not the king's lands, not the administration's lands, but the lands of the people. This bill is a good bill. I urge the passage of this legislation.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HOLDING). The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DAINES) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2013

The Committee resumed its sitting.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HOLDING). The gentleman from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), cochair of the Sportsmen's Caucus.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Chairman, let me thank the ranking member of the committee, the gentleman from Oregon, for allowing me to speak in support of this legislation even though he has reserved time in opposition.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013. Today's bill is the product of the work of members of the bipartisan Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, which I serve as cochair. The Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus is the largest caucus in Congress, boasting nearly 300 members. The caucus seeks to advance hunting, angling, shooting, and trapping legislative priorities. Today's bill is comprised of eight individual bills that seek to promote these interests.

Mr. Chairman, not only is hunting and fishing a great passion for millions of individuals like myself, it is also a major contributor to the U.S. economy. Mississippi, home to some of the world's finest duck, whitetail, and sport fishing, contributed \$2.2 billion to the economy in 2011 alone.

My congressional district receives scores of visitors each year, including some Members of this body, who come to enjoy the vast natural resources that the Mississippi Delta has to offer. When these individuals visit Mississippi, they hire local outfitters, stay in our hotels, eat at our restaurants, pay State hunting fees, and purchase hunting gear like Primos brand hunting calls, which are produced in my district in Flora, Mississippi. In fact, it has been estimated that hunting and fishing supports 33,000 jobs in Mississippi.

Mr. Chairman, the bill before us today makes improvements to a wide range of issues, including the ability to purchase duck stamps online; statutorily establish the Wildlife Hunting and Heritage Conservation Council, which was administratively formed by Secretaries Salazar and Vilsack in 2012. It also reduces a financial burden on States and local governments for target range construction and maintenance. It also excludes commercial

ammo and fishing tackle from being classified as toxic substances, which the EPA has agreed. It also directs the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to issue a permit and assess an annual fee for commercial filming crews of five people or fewer for activities on Federal lands and waterways administered by the Secretary. It also allows law-abiding citizens to transport firearms across Army Corps of Engineers projects like the hundreds of miles of levee that I have in my district. And it also opens up more Federal land to hunting and fishing.

Mr. Chairman, while this bill makes tremendous strides to meet the needs of sportsmen, there are several other provisions that were not included in this bill that we must continue to push for, including an overhaul of the Red Snapper Management in the Gulf of Mexico, the ability to convert decommissioned oil rigs to fish habitat, and the reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I look forward to working with my colleagues to address these issues.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3590.

Mr. BENISHEK. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN).

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer my support for H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013, better known as the SHARE Act.

I commend my friend and cochair of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, Representative BOB LATTA of Ohio, for his leadership in guiding this bill to the floor.

I am also proud to join with the Sportsmen's Caucus cochairs, both Representative LATTA and Representative BENNIE THOMPSON of Mississippi, and vice chair Representative TIM WALZ of Minnesota in support of this important bill.

As a member of the Natural Resources Committee, I would also like to thank Chairman DOC HASTINGS for his work and cooperation on behalf of America's sportsmen to support this legislation through the committee process.

As a sportsman, I am humbled to advocate for this community and help introduce this legislation to advance priorities for American anglers, hunters, and conservationists.

This commonsense package will expand opportunities for recreation, support fair treatment, and modernize programs for sportsmen, and includes a proposal I authored to allow migratory waterfowl hunters to purchase their annual Federal duck stamp online.

As vice chair of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, I can proudly say that this provision is important to waterfowl hunters across the country. Title V, the Permanent Electronic Duck Stamp Act, is supported by the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation and Ducks Unlimited.

I would also like to acknowledge Representative RON KIND as an original cosponsor of the Permanent Electronic Duck Stamp Act. The gentleman from Wisconsin is a dedicated conservationist and longtime supporter and friend to sportsmen.

There is no cost to taxpayers. There is broad bipartisan support for this innovative idea, and this convenient 21st century delivery system will be utilized by thousands of American sportsmen in the future.

□ 1430

Again, I would encourage my colleagues to support this important package, H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, I just inquire as to how much time remains on either side?

The ACTING CHAIR. The gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) has 19½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK) has 21½ minutes remaining.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to this legislation, and I would hope that my colleagues will read it and look before they leap. It is called the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013. Unfortunately, this is mired in a muck of text in the legislation that I think does just the opposite of enhancement. It ought to read, "Kill the Habitat and Wildlife and Enjoy a Dead Forest Act."

This bill diminishes the conservation measures designed to protect the habitat for wildlife by creating loopholes in the Wilderness Act and weakens the National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA, process.

Title I, for example, amends the Toxic Substances Control Act to prohibit the EPA from regulating toxic substances contained in bullets, angling lures, and other hunting equipment with respect to toxic substances.

It is not just people that are affected by toxic substances; so are animals. Here they prohibit barring lead in bullets. Now, California is a big hunter's State. Guess what? California State law prohibits the use of lead. Why? Because the Federal Government has spent millions, millions, and millions of dollars trying to restore the California condor. Does that count? Ask the Ventana and Post Ranch Inn. Post Ranch is \$1,000 a night—nobody can afford that—but it is filled all the time. Why? Because you can see condors and mountain lions and sea otters and other things that we have protected by protecting their environment.

What does a condor die from? It eats dead things. It eats things that have been killed by bullets. It eats that lead, and guess what? It kills the condor. It is done over and over again. There is no question about this. This is the number