

drawer and he took no action on it. So it is not that the House isn't doing anything, it is that the Senate did something really illogical: the Gang of Eight's bill for instantaneous, perpetual, and retroactive amnesty.

And then we have the number three-ranking Democrat in the Senate trying to taunt the Speaker of the House into doing something equally as foolish: bring amnesty to the floor of the House. This place would blow up and the American people would arrive here in short order because they love the rule of law. Not only natural born Americans, not only naturalized Americans, green card holders that come here to achieve the American Dream. That means from any country they came from and every country they came from, those who came here to love America and respect and appreciate the American Dream.

But what is happening is it is being eroded by destruction of the rule of law for political motivation on the part of people like Barack Obama, HARRY REID, CHUCK SCHUMER, and DICK DURBIN.

There is another quote here by CHUCK SCHUMER that says:

Enough is enough. We will not let our party be hijacked by extremists whose xenophobia causes them to prefer maintaining a broken system over achieving a tough, fair, and practical long-term solution.

Xenophobia. I had to look that up when we came to this Congress. We don't use that in the streets where I come from, but I have known its definition for a long time: being afraid of something that you don't know. Well, I don't often get accused of being afraid of anything, so when I am I pay a little bit of attention to that.

I would say this. CHUCK SCHUMER is not like me. I am not afraid of him so it is not xenophobia. HARRY REID is not like me. I am not afraid of HARRY REID, so that is not xenophobia. DICK DURBIN is not like me. I am not afraid of him. That is not xenophobia. What xenophobia are they talking about, Mr. Speaker, is my question?

So if we are going to have some kind of a challenge of rhetoric bouncing back and forth between the House and the Senate, let's do it face to face, let's do it eye to eye. Let's have that duel, not like Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton—I would be the one standing on the high ground on that—but let's do it like real men do it today, not dueling pistols at 50 paces, let's do this with microphones within arm's reach, Mr. Speaker. Maybe we could get to the bottom of this and we could determine who exactly had the xenophobia.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind Members that while debate may include policy criticisms of the President and Members of the Senate, it is not in order to engage in personalities toward those parties.

STOP THE FRANK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) for 30 minutes.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time this afternoon.

I am sorry you are not going to get the benefit of the posters I brought down here with me because I am talking about a topic that is not one we bring up a lot in this Chamber. It is the use of the congressional frank.

I will wager that when you were elected to Congress, the only thing you knew about the frank is that perhaps you cursed it from time to time when it showed up in your mailbox. I brought a copy down here because I am sure there are going to be staff and folks back in the office who hadn't seen one before, folks walking around the office building today.

But the frank, the congressional frank—why they call it the frank I do not know—is that signature that you and I put up in the top right-hand corner of our envelopes so that we can send mail.

I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, if you have gone to town hall meetings where this hasn't come up, I would be interested to know. Because on that list of congressional perks—and you know the ones I am talking about, ones like you get free health care for life, which of course is not true, ones like if you serve one term in Congress you get a free pension for life, also not true—but among those perks is the free mail perk, the congressional frank. It drives me crazy, Mr. Speaker, it drives my constituents crazy, and we have the power to fix it here in this Chamber. I want to stop the frank.

Now, folks might say if you want to stop the frank, why not just stop using the frank. Fair enough. It is because the law requires us to use it. I am going get to that later, Mr. Speaker, because I will bet you have not seen that code section before.

Here is an article from Bloomberg, Mr. Speaker, lest you think this is something that you and I just hear at town hall meetings. This is something that is out, and you see it in newspaper after newspaper after newspaper. A headline—this is two summers ago, Bloomberg: "Lawmakers Intent on Dictating How the U.S. Postal Service Cuts Billions From Its Spending Are Among Those Helping Themselves to a Favorite Congressional Perk: Free Mail."

I want to be clear: there is no free mail, there is no free mail in the United States Congress today. This frank that I am talking about, Mr. Speaker, every time you sign your name to the top of a letter you are paying the full freight on that letter. You are absolutely going to pay for it when it hits the Postal Service. Sometimes it is on the honor system that you are reporting it, sometimes the mail house here at the Capitol is counting it. There is no free mail.

But even a group as reputable as Bloomberg believes that there is. I

know with certainty, because I hear it from my folks back home, our constituents believe that there is. In this time where trust is the commodity that is in the tightest supply in this town, we must do those things to restore trust with men and women back home. We must end this favorite of congressional perks.

Now, this is Bloomberg 2012, Mr. Speaker. I don't want you to think this is something that we have just started talking about. You can't see it from where you sit. But I also brought The New York Times from March of 1875. That is right. March of 1875, The New York Times is chronicling a vote that was taken right here in the U.S. House of Representatives. Well, not right here in this building on this floor. It was taken through those doors and into the next Chamber. But it says this. It says:

By a vote of 113 to 65, the House concurred in the Senate amendment of the postal appropriations bill to restore the franking privilege.

Now, the franking privilege, this signing of your name on a letter, it came from England, and it came in the early days of the Postal Service, where maybe you had an important governmental responsibility, maybe you needed to communicate with folks on the other side of the country and there was no local post office close by. You could be living out on the frontier, you could be far away, you just might not have had a coin in your pocket. So it allowed in the name of government efficiency for Members of Congress to sign their name at the top of a letter and drop that into the postal stream.

□ 1430

I promise you there is not a man or a woman who serves in Congress today who does not know where his local post office is. There is not a man or woman who serves in Congress today who struggles to get over to the grocery store where there are stamps for sale.

We do not need to be able to sign our names at the top of an envelope today to get it done, but in 1875, after Congress had abolished the frank, in the name of abolishing congressional perks, the Senate passed a bill to bring it back into being. The House concurred.

The New York Times says this:

So far as our observation goes, there has never been any demand for the restoration of the franking nuisance, except on the part of Congressmen.

I want you to think about this. Where does this sense that Congress gets free mail privileges come from, Mr. Speaker? It comes from the fact that, once upon a time, Congress actually got free mail privileges.

Again, the Postal Service was in its infancy, and in order to conduct the people's business, the franking privilege was adopted from what folks had seen at play in England, but in 1875, Congress was still trying to grapple with the distrust that the franking privilege created amongst its constituencies.

The New York Times, March 1875:

So far as our observation goes, there has never been any demand for the restoration of the franking nuisance, except on the part of Congressmen.

Mr. Speaker, what I hope you will help me carry to our colleagues is that we no longer need that franking nuisance.

There will be men and women in this Chamber who will say: ROB, what is the big deal? Don't we have bigger problems to struggle with?

Of course we do, but this one is easy for us to fix. There are those men and women out there who believe that there is a congressional perk that exists in this Chamber—at a time of record budget deficits—that no other American has access to, and we can abolish it with the stroke of our pen right here in the House.

This is something that has plagued me and my conscience in a way that I just wanted to stop using it. I just wanted to start buying stamps. I want you to think about the micromanagement in this institution, Mr. Speaker.

My plan—my radical plan—was that I was going to buy a stamp and send a letter. Whoa. Lo and behold, Mr. Speaker, it turns out that that is against the rules. I have a copy here of the Members' Congressional Handbook from this Congress.

It says:

Postal expenses can be incurred only when the frank is insufficient.

That means, for the whole code section that tells you what the frank can be used for, only if you are outside of that code section can you put a stamp on.

I have highlighted it here, Mr. Speaker:

Postage may not be used in lieu of the frank.

Here it is, Mr. Speaker, in large print, with my name at the top of a letter. It embarrasses me every time it goes out the door because I know, even when I am doing the people's business—which I am doing with each and every letter that goes out the door in responding to constituents' concerns and in answering constituents' questions—that folks do not feel served on the other end.

They feel reminded that, perhaps, there is one set of rules for Congress and one set of rules for everybody else, but the rules that we have agreed to live by in this body prohibit me from buying a stamp and sending that letter out instead.

The good news, Mr. Speaker, is that it turns out, when the law is not written the way the law ought to be written, my constituents have empowered me with a voting card with which to change it.

I have partnered with my friend, TAMMY DUCKWORTH from Illinois, a Democrat on the other side of the aisle; and, together, we are going to stop the frank. We are going to abolish this so-called congressional perk—this free mailing privilege, this bane and stain

in this Chamber—that folks have been fighting to get rid of for over 100 years. We are going to do it.

I am not optimistic enough to believe that this can be done alone. That is why I have a fantastic partner on the Democratic side of the aisle, and that is why she and I, together, are going to those groups around this town who care about congressional accountability in order to make them our partners in this effort. I have quotes from two of them.

If you sit on the right-hand side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, the National Taxpayers Union is certainly a group that you know and respect. Their appeal is certainly bipartisan, but I know it has credibility on the right.

The National Taxpayers Union says this:

Repealing the so-called "franking privilege" is a fair and simple reform that will introduce pay-as-you-go budgeting to one of the most basic units of government—the congressional office. Check there "on board."

Now, if you are on the other side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, I know Public Citizen is a bipartisan group. They speak to folks on both sides of the aisle, and public integrity is their mission.

Public Citizen says this:

Public Citizen heartily supports the Woodall-Duckworth legislation to rein in the abuse of taxpayer-funded frank mail for Members of Congress, and it applauds your work of making this commonsense legislation come from across party lines.

We can do this.

Here is my frustration as a 3-year Member of this House, Mr. Speaker, and I know it is your frustration, too. You can't do the big things without each other, and it is tough to find one another when you haven't been able to do the little things together that build the trust.

Trust is the commodity that is missing. It is not just missing between our constituents and this Chamber. Mr. Speaker, you know it is often missing within this Chamber. We must seize upon opportunities, big and small, to come together to do those things that we know are the right things to do.

I will say to my colleagues, Mr. Speaker—because I know there are going to be folks back in their offices who are watching and who are saying: Hey, wait a minute. Don't we have a whole list of rules about the dos and don'ts of sending mail from a congressional office?

We do. Those rules and regulations are housed in what is called the Franking Commission today, which is actually the Committee on Mailing Standards.

I don't propose to abolish a single one of those. Those rules, for folks who don't know, are designed to prevent people from campaigning on the taxpayer dime out of their official offices.

Now, there are folks in this Chamber who might like to abolish those rules, too. That is not my fight. The stand-

ards that prevent Members from abusing the mail in their offices, that prevent them from campaigning out of their offices—all of those standards to try to make sure that taxpayer dollars are being targeted only at those taxpayer-required needs—will remain in place.

This, this signature at the top of a letter, suggests to every American that, somehow, when you get elected to Congress, the rules no longer apply to you, big rules and small rules, like licking a stamp. Now, you don't even have to lick the stamps anymore. You can just peel them off—they are self-stick now—and stick them right on.

We can do this. There is a low opinion that folks often hold of Members of Congress, Mr. Speaker, but I believe we can buy stamps and stick them on letters. I believe that we can—but wait. There is nothing in what I propose that requires you to lick your own stamps or to even stick on your own stamps.

If you want to get a postal permit device like every business in America has, by golly, run your office like a business. If we want to change the rules, so that we use the penalty mail system, which is what the executive branch uses—what the White House would use, what the IRS would use, what the Justice Department would use, which is the same as a postage-paid marker from a business, except that it is a postage-paid marker from a government—fair game.

We are the only folks who run the show this way, and it is time for that to stop.

I don't think folks understand how far it goes. The franking privilege exists in statute. If I were to pass on my franking privilege, Mr. Speaker, it goes to my wife. Did you know that, if Members of Congress were to pass on, suddenly, their spouses would be allowed to start signing their names to letters and dropping them into the postal stream? Why is that? Why is this something that I can deed on after my demise? In fact, why is it something that exists at all?

The answer is, once upon a time, it was difficult to find a stamp. Can't we agree that those days are behind us?

Public Citizen can agree, and the National Taxpayers Union can agree, and TAMMY DUCKWORTH from Illinois can agree, and ROB WOODALL from Georgia can agree. I know this is something that we can do together.

Mr. Speaker, I don't claim that this is going to be the proposal that saves the world. It is not; yet, for every taxpayer who opens up the newspaper every day and does not find news about how his taxpayer dollars are being invested transformatively in the lives of children, invested transformatively for men and women harmed in the defense of this Nation, but instead, opens up the newspaper and finds story after story of waste, of fraud and of abuse, our role here in this Chamber is to root that out and to stop it wherever we may find it.

Don't you believe, before we can help someone else clean up his house, we must clean up our own house?

Mr. Speaker, I encourage you to visit my Web page—which is woodall.house.gov/stopthefrank—because if you and I don't push this amongst our colleagues, it is not going to rise to the level of action. It is just something that we can do. We can do it. We can do it right away. There is no need to delay. We can begin restoring faith one bit at a time.

Let's restore faith with this today, with another bill tomorrow and with another bill the day after that, and one of these days, we might find that the American people have trust and confidence in their Congress again. It wasn't true in 1875, and it may be optimistic to believe it could be true in 2015, but I am certain of this: if we know that we have opportunities and if we fail to seize those opportunities, we will never earn and, I dare say, deserve the trust of our constituencies back home.

Mr. Speaker, send any of your constituents who are interested to woodall.house.gov/stopthefrank, and in fact, encourage the folks that you see and interact with from other parts of the country to visit Stop the Frank. Then encourage their Congressmen and their Congresswomen to be a part of this effort.

This does not have to be a partisan issue because it is not a partisan issue. This does not have to be a wait-and-see issue because it is an issue we have been looking at for more than 100 years.

What this can be is a get-it-done-together issue that, again, with one small step at a time, begins to earn the trust of the American people that I know each and every Member of this Chamber wants to earn.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2086. An act to address current emergency shortages of propane and other home heating fuels and to provide greater flexibility and information for Governors to address such emergencies in the future; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 43 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, May 23, 2014, at 3 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5749. A letter from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits received May 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

5750. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Financial Management, United States Capitol Police, transmitting the semiannual report of receipts and expenditures of appropriations and other funds for the period October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2014; (H. Doc. No. 113—116); to the Committee on House Administration and ordered to be printed.

5751. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 620 in the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 130925836-4174-02] (RIN: 0648-XD236) received May 2, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5752. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Biennial Specifications and Management Measures; Inseason Adjustments [Docket No.: 120814338-2711-02] (RIN: 0648-BE10) received May 2, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5753. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2014 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Vermilion Snapper [Docket No.: 130312235-3658-02] (RIN: 0648-XD173) received May 2, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5754. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher/Processors Using Hook-and-Line Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 130925836-4174-02] (RIN: 0648-XD182) received May 2, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5755. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries [Docket No.: 130214139-3542-02] (RIN: 0648-XD222) received May 2, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5756. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone: Akadama Fireworks Display, Richmond Inner Harbor, Richmond, CA [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0133] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received May 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5757. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety

Zone; Lake Havasu Gran Prix; Lake Havasu, AZ [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0177] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received May 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5758. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Pago Pago Harbor, American Samoa [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0014] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received May 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5759. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations and Safety Zones; Recurring Events in Northern New England [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0904] (RIN: 1625-AA08; AA00) received May 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5760. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations for Marine Events, Tred Avon River; Between Bellevue, MD and Oxford, MD [Docket No.: USCG-2013-1059] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received May 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5761. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations; Eighth Coast Guard District Annual and Recurring Marine Events Update [Docket No.: USCG-2013-1061] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received May 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5762. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zones; Revolution 3 Triathlon, Lake Erie, Sandusky Bay, Sandusky, OH [Docket No.: USCG-2012-0730] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received May 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5763. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone, Barnegat Inlet; Barnegat Light, NJ [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0145] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received May 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5764. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulation, Rotary Club of Fort Lauderdale New River Raft Race, New River; Fort Lauderdale, FL [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0001] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received May 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5765. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Great Egg Harbor Bay, (Ship Channel and Beach Thorofare NJICW), Somers Point and Ocean City, NJ [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0121] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received May 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5766. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Broad Creek, Laurel, DE [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0778] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received May 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5767. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety