

freed from prison, the poor, the rich, and all the forgiven came to me.

"Go, ask that girl to compare, a life of despair to a breath of free air, ask her: Why are you here, not somewhere over there?"

"She'd say to you, that long ago, her ancestors came here, through hail, sleet and snow. Sunrise and sunset, they stayed there until the end, and when my job was finished, their hearts all had mends.

"I have been many things, and most are quite clear, a haven, a refuge that people hold dear.

"These waters of mine, so brilliant, so light, with hopes of tomorrow, a future, so bright. Coming from places of sadness and fear, I open my arms, and welcome them here."

By Eliana Jaffee, a fifth grader at the Pardes Jewish School in Scottsdale, Arizona.

#### RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF CLEONE CREQUE

(Ms. PLASKETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Cleone Creque. "Cle," as many of us call her, was the first female in the Virgin Islands to be elected to territorywide office after she was elected Senator-at-Large in the Virgin Islands Legislature in 1976. This past weekend, the legislative annex conference room in St. John was named in her honor.

During her legislative career, she held key leadership positions on important Committees on Welfare, Health, and Labor. Aside from her distinguished legacy as a political stalwart and advocate for less fortunate in her community, she is a nurse, a mother, and a businesswoman, and she speaks her mind.

She is a positive and inspirational role model for Caribbean women, for all women, and she is my friend and my mentor.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO GLORIA JOSEPH

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, I would like to, at this time, extend happy birthday wishes to Gloria Joseph, a community organizer, public servant, matriarch, and Ph.D of haute cuisine.

I wish her happy birthday.

Both of these women are ultimate public servants, true Renaissance women, and true Virgin Islanders.

#### DEMOCRACY MATTERS

(Mr. GRAYSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GRAYSON. Madam Speaker, I would like to express my concern about events that are happening now in Brazil. In Brazil, President Dilma Rousseff was reelected because a majority of Brazilians wanted to pursue

her progressive policies further. But shortly after her reelection, some members of the rightwing opposition started to question the election results and, aided by the conservative media in Brazil, they accused her of manipulating the state budget in order to pay for social programs.

But now they have taken it further than that, and beyond mere accusations, and they have forced her temporarily out of office by impeaching her and putting her out of power while those proceedings take place.

The interim government is implementing the exact policies that were rejected by a majority of Brazilian voters, austerity, cutting social programs, cutting education, cutting housing, cutting health care. These are the things that people wanted; it is what they voted for. Yet, the interim government is undermining democracy by denying these things to the people who voted for them.

My message is simple. Democracy matters. Votes matter. All around the world we are seeing rightwingers trying to deny the democratic forces their rightful power for winning elections.

In Britain, we have seen an effort to undermine the results of Brexit. In Portugal, the same thing happened when a leftwing majority won parliament. And here in the United States, we have efforts to undermine the President. This must end. Democracy matters.

#### COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WAGNER) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, July 13, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,  
*The Speaker, House of Representatives,*  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on July 13, 2016 at 9:13 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 4875.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO HOUSE AMENDMENT TO S. 764, NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2015; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S. 304, MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY WHISTLEBLOWER ACT; AND WAIVING A REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(A) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS REPORTED FROM THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call

up House Resolution 822 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 822

*Resolved*, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to take from the Speaker's table the bill (S. 764) to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment to the House amendment thereto, and to consider in the House, without intervention of any point of order, a motion offered by the chair of the Committee on Agriculture or his designee that the House concur in the Senate amendment to the House amendment. The Senate amendment and the motion shall be considered as read. The motion shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Agriculture. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to adoption without intervening motion.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (S. 304) to improve motor vehicle safety by encouraging the sharing of certain information. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. An amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114-61 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 3. The requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported on the legislative day of July 14, 2016, or July 15, 2016.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina is recognized for 1 hour.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FOXX. 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 gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, House Resolution 822 provides for a closed rule providing for consideration of S. 304, the Conscience Protection Act, and a motion to concur with the Senate amendment to the House amendment to S. 764, GMO labeling requirements.

Madam Speaker, the rule before us today provides for consideration of S. 304, the Conscience Protection Act.

This bill protects rights of conscience for healthcare providers who choose not to participate in abortion.

The bill reinforces current law and makes clear that Federal, State, and local governments, including subsidiary agencies, cannot discriminate against healthcare providers who choose not to provide abortions.

This bill is necessary because the California Department of Managed Health Care has mandated that all health plans must cover elective abortion. This includes health plans offered by religious nonprofits, and even churches.

This action by the State agency violates a provision of Federal law known as the Weldon Amendment, which provides that States receiving Federal funds may not discriminate against health plans based on their decision not to cover or pay for abortions.

Religious employers in California who offer group health plans to their employees lodged an objection with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which oversees enforcement of the Weldon Amendment. HHS massively and incorrectly reinterpreted the Weldon Amendment to allow California to continue to force these employers to pay for and provide coverage for elective abortions.

In addition to providing commonsense protections, S. 304 also allows a private right of action, giving providers recourse should they face penalties or punishment for exercising their conscience rights.

To be clear, this bill does not ban or restrict abortion in any way. If enacted, abortion will remain just as legal as it is today. In spite of this fact, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will continue to protest this sensible legislation.

The Conscience Protection Act is not the only important legislation the House will consider this week. This rule also provides for consideration of a motion to concur with the Senate amendment to the House amendment to S. 764, GMO labeling requirements.

The Senate amendment establishes a national labeling standard for bioengineered food, with exceptions for foods and products primarily composed of meat, poultry, or eggs.

This measure represents a truly bipartisan effort to prevent a complicated patchwork of State laws and regulations for labeling food products sold throughout the country that inevitably would lead to increased prices, confusion, and more than a few frustrated customers.

□ 1245

Americans would be well served to have both S. 304 and S. 764 considered this week, and I commend both bills to my colleagues as deserving of their support.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from

North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. McGOVERN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise in very strong opposition to this closed rule, which provides for consideration of S. 764, legislation to create, in my view, inadequate GMO labeling requirements, and S. 304, yet another Republican attack on women's health.

Both pieces of legislation are being rushed to the floor this week by the Republican leadership as they ignore urgent calls from the American people for action on a number of pressing public health crises like gun violence and the Zika virus.

Speaker RYAN promised a new way of doing business in this House when he became Speaker, but we continue to see more of the same broken promises and failed leadership. During the past several weeks, I have joined my Democratic colleagues in calling upon Speaker RYAN to hold a vote on two commonsense, bipartisan pieces of legislation that are overwhelmingly supported by the American people: the no fly, no buy bill, and legislation to expand and strengthen our background check system.

Communities in my home State of Massachusetts and across our country are raising their voices and coming together to demand that Congress do something, not hold more moments of silence but actually take action. At the very least, we can keep guns out of the hands of criminals and suspected terrorists. We have that power to do something about that, and, yet, the Republican majority continues to sit on their hands and be indifferent in the face of the tragedies that we read about each and every day in this country.

Recognizing this call for action, Speaker RYAN announced on June 30 that the House would vote during the coming week on Republican gun-related legislation. But instead of working with both Democrats and Republicans on a bipartisan bill, Speaker RYAN hastily pushed out a toothless, NRA-written and -backed bill that would do nothing to keep Americans safe.

But even more frustrating, but sadly not surprising, is the fact that even this bill was too much for some of the hardliners on the Republican side. So, instead of answering the call of the American people, eager for Congress to finally act to disarm hate and help prevent gun violence, Speaker RYAN has canceled any votes on gun safety legislation. It is really a sad situation, Madam Speaker.

One month after 49 lives were lost in Orlando to an act of hate and senseless gun violence, Speaker RYAN is ready to adjourn the Congress for the rest of the summer, failing to take any action at all to protect the American people and

keep guns out of the hands of criminals and suspected terrorists. Americans deserve better from their leaders, and I predict that the American people will not forget this.

But, look, we shouldn't be surprised. This is just the latest in a string of broken promises and failed action from this Republican majority and its leadership.

This week, instead of addressing the pressing issues I previously mentioned, the House will be voting on a weak—on a very, very weak—GMO labeling bill and yet another piece of legislation that attacks a woman's right to choose.

Every American has a fundamental right to know what is in the food that they eat, plain and simple. I believe they ought to have that right, and that is what today's debate is about. To be clear, today's debate is not about the science behind GMOs. It is also not about whether GMOs are good or bad. Whether you love GMOs or hate them, we should all agree that you ought to know if they are in the food that you are feeding to your family and your children.

Madam Speaker, the Food and Drug Administration requires labeling of thousands of ingredients, additives, and processes, many of which have nothing to do with safety or nutrition. For example, the FDA requires mandatory labeling of juice when it is from concentrate. It is just one of the ways we tell people what is in their food and how it is made.

This piece of legislation would require companies to label their products if they contain GMOs, and I strongly support that sentiment. But the way this legislation is written, it provides three options for labeling: words on the package, which makes sense; a symbol to be developed by USDA, which makes sense; but then there is this, a so-called quick response, or QR, code. It was at the behest of big industry that the QR code be listed as an option, not what is in the interest of the American consumer but what is in the interest of a few special interests.

Now, I would be much more comfortable with a bill that requires either words or a symbol, but a QR code is something that I cannot support. Nobody here should support that. In order to access the information through the QR code, an individual must have a smartphone and must have access to the Internet. The reality is that not every American has access to a smartphone or the Internet. Look, I don't get reception at a local grocery store here in D.C. just a couple of blocks from where we are here in the U.S. Capitol. It is frustrating. What good would a QR code do if I can't get a data signal using my phone? One in five Americans in the United States does not have a smartphone. That includes 50 percent of Americans who are low-income and living in rural areas and over 65 percent of elderly Americans. If we end up going down the route

of a QR code, all of these people will be prevented from accessing the information that this bill is supposed to make available to all consumers. Even if someone has a smartphone, they will have to scan every single item they purchase in order to obtain the desired information, and this is assuming they will have access to the Internet in the grocery store. That is anything but a quick response. It is a bad idea. It is a bad idea. It is an intentional measure to deny consumers information.

We considered what we call the DARK Act on this House floor a few months ago. This is the son of the DARK Act. It keeps people in the dark about what is in their food that they are buying. The debate about GMO labeling is about transparency and the right of every American to know what is in the food they eat. It is very simple. The best approach would be a clear and easy-to-understand label or symbol, not some crazy QR code that only creates more hassle and confusion.

From the very beginning of the debate about GMO labeling, some in the food industry have stuck to two main arguments. They have said that GMOs are perfectly safe and that it would cost far too much for them to add a symbol or words to their packaging. But once they came up with the idea to put a large QR code on their packaging that they hope consumers will just simply ignore or not be able to access, they suddenly dropped their complaints about the financial cost of changing their packaging.

The truth is that the QR code will take up more space on their packaging than any symbol or simple written label would, and the QR code is going to have to include wording as well. It would be so much easier and better for consumers for the food industry to just use wording or a symbol and not this complicated, confusing QR code.

We know that food companies change labels on their products all the time. Jerry Greenfield of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream said that it is a normal cost of business to change their packaging. Campbell Soup is committed to including words on their packaging and has said that in doing this, there will not be an increase in food prices. I want to thank Campbell's as well as Mars and Dannon for all committing to using words on their label and not some kind of confusing QR code.

The majority of Americans favor mandatory GMO labels that are clear, straightforward, and easy to understand.

Wouldn't it be nice if—and I know this is a radical idea in this Congress—but wouldn't it be nice if, for once, this Congress actually did what the American people want? Keeping our constituents in the dark should not be tolerated. And, therefore, this bill should be soundly defeated by Democrats and Republicans alike.

Madam Speaker, we are also considering a totally unrelated bill, H.R. 4828, the so-called Conscience Protection

Act, which ironically is yet another unconscionable attempt to take away women's right to health care.

Under current law, hospitals and other healthcare providers can already refuse service to an individual based on the practitioner's own moral objection. But this legislation would take this a step further and actually permit the withholding of medical information about a patient's condition if the physician believes that such information could potentially lead to an abortion. Bosses would be permitted to impose their own religious beliefs across their entire company by withholding abortion services on employer-sponsored health plans. It is not an employer's decision what type of medical care is needed by their employees. Women have the same rights to access health care as men do, and no boss should be able to deny them that right.

This will be the House Republicans' 13th vote to attack women's health care in this Congress alone. Thirteen times we have gone down a similar road. How can we possibly consider a bill that would allow insurance companies, doctors, or healthcare facilities to substitute their own religious opinions for actual medical information? Every woman should be able to trust that, when they go to their doctor, they are receiving all the facts and information that they need to make their own health decisions.

Encouraging doctors to withhold vital information from women about their health is outrageous and incredibly dangerous. Such a reckless bill has no place in Congress. This bill is nothing more than the latest attempt by House Republicans to appeal to their extreme rightwing base.

This legislation does not include any exemption in the case of rape, incest, or endangering the life of the woman and would preempt any State law that does allow for the coverage of abortion.

Madam Speaker, we have countless women sharing their stories of how these types of laws have had devastating and tragic effects on them. One woman's water broke at 20 weeks prematurely, and doctors determined that the fetus would not survive birth. The Catholic hospital she was at refused to perform an abortion since the fetus still had a heartbeat. For 7 weeks, this woman had to carry a fetus in her with the knowledge that it had no chance of survival. It wasn't until she was suffering from severe hemorrhaging that a hospital would finally induce labor. The baby died almost immediately after birth, as doctors expected.

Another woman's water broke prematurely at 18 weeks. She was rushed to the nearest hospital, which was a Catholic hospital. Doctors knew that the fetus was no longer viable and would die immediately upon birth. However, this information was withheld from the woman. She was simply given two Tylenol and sent home unaware that there was no chance her

child would survive birth. The woman returned twice more, each time with severe bleeding, and it was only at the end of the second visit as they were sending her home, she went into labor and gave birth. The baby died within hours, as the doctors expected.

Women's health must always come first, and this only puts more lives at risk.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle not to support this rule.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI).

Mrs. WALORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Conscience Protection Act, a bill I cosponsored to protect pro-life healthcare providers from discrimination.

Doctors, nurses, employers, social service agencies, and insurance plans that choose not to take part in abortions as a matter of conscience should not face discrimination or penalty.

This bill reaffirms protections already in place by prohibiting the Federal Government and entities that receive Federal funding from discriminating against or penalizing those who are exercising their conscience rights while, most importantly, it gives victims of discrimination legal recourse to defend themselves.

Currently, it is up to the Department of Health and Human Services to enforce the law—and that is something that this administration has not always been willing to do.

The Conscience Protection Act will give pro-life healthcare providers and employers full conscience protections without loopholes or uncertainty.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this essential bill to protect life and those who exercise their conscience rights.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

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

I oppose this closed rule on an obnoxious bill. This bill is just another attempt in a long line of Republican attempts to interfere with women's health choices. This bill is part of a disturbing national trend. Some legislators at the Federal, State, and local level are attempting to insert religious exemptions into antidiscrimination and pro-women's health laws with which they do not agree.

Rather than trying a frontal assault on the laws themselves—which they know they would lose—they seek instead to use the premise of religion to allow further discrimination against women. We must not let them succeed.

Let's be clear what this is really all about. The Republicans are not happy with the Supreme Court's pro-choice decisions. They are not happy with the Affordable Care Act, which provides contraceptive coverage to millions of women with no out-of-pocket costs.

□ 1300

But try as they may, they cannot overturn *Roe v. Wade* and they cannot repeal *ObamaCare*. The American people won't let them do that. So now they are trying to bring religion into the discussion and dare us to oppose what they call basic First Amendment principles about freedom of religion. Well, guess what: that is not going to work either.

We see their bias, we see their intent, and we will not let them enshrine discrimination into Federal law. We won't let you punish women just because you are not pro-choice. That is not going to happen.

Let's be honest. This is not about religion; it is about abortion and contraception. So let's stop the charade.

In this case, the bill's sole purpose is to deny access to, and create more barriers to women seeking medical procedures that are legal and constitutionally protected. The bill would enable employers and healthcare companies to override women's personal reproductive health decisions. We have said this before and we will say it again: women's reproductive healthcare decisions simply should not be their boss' business.

Religious convictions should be protected but cannot be permitted to infringe on the rights of others. Employers, other than religious institutions, have no right to impose their religious opinions on their employees. An employer's opinion about the propriety of birth control or abortion must have no bearing on whether an employee can get access to abortion or birth control services.

Certainly no woman should be denied information about her medical condition or about birth control or abortion because of the religious opinions of her employer; that is not protecting the religious opinion of the employer. That is projecting the religious opinion of the employer onto the employee in derogation of her rights. Religious protections must not be used as a sword against the rights of third parties. They must be used as a shield to protect your own religious liberty, but not to hurt other people.

I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, predictably, our colleagues are misrepresenting the contents of this bill. This bill does not affect any abortion provider who currently performs the procedure and who wishes to continue.

If the Conscience Protection Act becomes law, abortion will still be just as legal and accessible as it is today. The bill seeks only to ensure that healthcare providers will not be forced by government to violate their moral or religious convictions.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER).

Mrs. WAGNER. Madam Speaker, I am honored to stand before the House today to speak on the Conscience Pro-

tection Act. I am speaking today on behalf of the over 55 million children who are unable to speak for themselves. I grieve their deaths.

Abortion not only brutally ends the life of children, it also forever changes the lives of their mothers. Because of the negative outcomes of abortion for mothers and children, many healthcare providers choose not to participate in this abhorrent practice. We must protect healthcare providers who reasonably—and conscientiously—object to participating in abortion.

At a speech in 2009, President Obama said clearly: "Let's honor the conscience of those who disagree with abortion." But that is no longer the practice of this administration.

Today, across the country, in flagrant violation of Federal law, churches are being forced to buy healthcare plans that pay for abortions, and nurses have been forced to assist in abortions.

The Conscience Protection Act would stop the government from discriminating against providers that exercise their right of conscience. It would ensure that those who have been penalized for exercising this right are allowed their day in court.

Madam Speaker, nobody should be forced to choose between their values or their job. Our country was founded on the right of conscience. We cannot abandon them now.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, let's be clear, and I want all of my colleagues to be clear on this issue. This bill would allow a woman's boss to decide whether or not she could have an abortion—her boss—because this bill allows employers who offer healthcare plans to deny women access to abortion services. This is outrageous, and I can't believe that this kind of bill has come to this floor.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI).

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise to urge my colleagues to vote against the Conscience Protection Act. This is just another attempt by the Republican majority to create barriers for women as they make personal decisions about their reproductive health care. This legislation would expand and make permanent existing refusal policies, which would erode important patient protections.

If this law were enacted, employers and companies could refuse to provide information to women about their health care. That is unacceptable.

Women have a right to receive all of the information they need as they make important decisions that are personal to them. Women's access to care, our ability to make choices about our health, and our right to be informed should always be protected.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this damaging legislation for women's health.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, if laws already enacted in the religious liberty protections enshrined in our Constitution were actually being protected, we wouldn't be here. We wouldn't be needing to vote on the Conscience Protection Act in the House of Representatives today.

Is it an attempt to prevent something? Yes. It is an attempt to protect all Americans' rights under our First Amendment. It is just that simple. Unfortunately, the right to exercise one's own conscience is under attack in the United States at the Federal and State level.

Let's be very clear on this. Conscience, as defined, is the "inner sense of what is right or wrong in one's conduct or motives, impelling one towards right action." It is the feeling that one has done something morally right or wrong. You cannot deny people rights that were enshrined in our Constitution and in our Bill of Rights just because it doesn't happen to fit a popular narrative right now.

If we cannot come together as the people's House and protect what we have been given by our forefathers and has been enshrined in our Bill of Rights and try to make it into something different, then we have totally missed the mark, and America should be greatly disappointed in whom they have sent to represent them.

None of us can turn our back on the Constitution. None of us can say that somehow this is something different than what it is. It is the protection of one's freedoms and liberties under our Bill of Rights and in our First Amendment. It is that simple.

Conscience—conscience—why should somebody have to sacrifice their religious conscience because somebody says let's redefine it into something else? It is nothing more than doing the right thing because it is the right thing to do, and I am talking about religious conscience.

Why would we limit our schools and our hospitals of religious founding? Why would we say to them, no, you don't have the right to do this; we are going to supersede that?

It is protection for the rights of the First Amendment. That is something we all took an oath to do, and that is what we need to do.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, again, if you believe that a woman's boss should make the decision about whether or not she could have access to abortion services, then you support this bill. I happen to think that a woman should make that decision on her own. It should be her decision and not the decision of her boss.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from Massachusetts. I think he just put it correctly.

These are difficult choices. They are moral choices. They are choices from

the heart and choices from the gut. But I do think that a woman who is in need of an abortion in her mind has the right to have those kinds of services and has the right to not have her boss veto them for her.

The Conscience Protection Act is the latest in a long line of attempts to interfere with women's autonomy and medical care. I have come to the floor a number of times to defend a woman's right to make her own healthcare decisions, a concept that, frankly, shouldn't need a defense at all. I respect decisions, one way or another.

This bill is marketed as one that would protect conscience rights, but let's be clear. Current law already allows health professionals to object to providing abortions for moral or religious reasons. The Conscience Protection Act would take this concept to a new extreme, expanding opportunities for employers to discriminate against women based on their reproductive health choices.

We have said this before and we will say it again: women's personal healthcare decisions are not their boss' business. An employer should not have the right to veto a medical decision by a woman. It is just not right.

Every patient should be able to make fully informed decisions about her health care without interference of her employer, and certainly without interference from Congress. I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

Again, whatever your moral choices are, I respect them; on both sides, I respect them. But it is not right for a woman who is seeking an abortion to have that abortion vetoed because her boss doesn't like abortions. I think that is a decision that should be left to the woman alone, not put more pressure on her, not force her to go against her will. This is something dealing with her body, her rights, not her boss' rights, so I urge my colleagues to oppose the bill.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, the charge that this would allow a woman's boss to prevent her from obtaining an abortion is a true outrage. It is a disgusting red herring.

This bill would allow employers to continue to have the freedom to decline to pay for abortions. No American should be forced to pay for the killing of an unborn child, whether they are a taxpayer or a private citizen. The other side should not stoop to such tactics.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I thank my good friend, Mrs. Foxx for yielding and thank her for her extraordinary Pro-life leadership.

Madam Speaker, in an unconscionable abuse of power, for almost 2 years, the State of California has forced all insurance plans under its purview and the people in institutions that pay the premiums—to subsidize abortion on demand. Numerous faith-based entities

filed complaints pursuant to law with the HHS Office for Civil Rights seeking, and fully expecting, relief.

Effective June 21, however, the Obama administration flatly refused to enforce U.S. law—current law—protecting the civil right of conscience. Cardinal Timothy Dolan said, "It is shocking that HHS has allowed the State of California to force all employers—even churches—to fund and facilitate elective abortions in their health insurance plans."

I would note parenthetically to my colleagues, this isn't about ObamaCare and the massive taxpayer funding for abortion embedded—according to GAO's analysis—in over 1,000 insurance plans on the exchanges, which was contrary to what the President had promised right here in this Chamber, 30 feet away from me, in a joint session of Congress in 2009. No. This is about private health insurance plans of Catholic dioceses, religious schools, and others who have been ordered to violate their deeply held convictions and pay for the killing of unborn children by hideous dismemberment procedures, toxic compounds, or chemical poisoning.

The Weldon Federal conscience clause, authored by Congressman Dave Weldon of Florida and continuously in effect for well over a decade, is explicit and comprehensive, but it is not being enforced by the Obama Administration.

The Weldon amendment says, in pertinent part, that it is illegal for any "discrimination" against a healthcare entity "on the basis that the healthcare entity does not provide, pay for, provide coverage of, or refer for abortions." The law's definition of healthcare entity explicitly includes "a health insurance plan."

Despite the absolute clarity of the Weldon language, injured parties, including the Catholic church, have been denied relief.

The Obama Administration's refusal to enforce the civil right of conscience is not only unfair and unjustified, it violates the rule of law, makes a mockery of the President's 2009 Notre Dame speech, mentioned by my colleague from Missouri, when Obama said: "Let's honor the conscience of those who disagree with abortion." Mr. Obama's words don't match his deeds and he is not honoring the civil rights of conscience.

The Conscience Protection Act of 2016, authored by Congresswoman DIANE BLACK, seeks to end discrimination against people, plans, and providers for refusing to be involved in the killing of unborn children. The bill says that the Federal Government or any State or local government that receives Federal assistance may not penalize, retaliate against, or otherwise discriminate against those who refuse to perform, refer for, pay for, or otherwise participate in abortion.

□ 1315

The linchpin of this legislation, of the Conscience Protection Act, pro-

tections people, insurance plans, and other entities from being forced to participate by providing a private right of action.

The HHS Office for Civil Rights has failed miserably. In this country, we need a remedy that is durable and that will provide the protection that people are demanding, especially today in California, but really the entire country.

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

Let's be honest with one another. What this is all about here is that some of my friends on the other side believe that abortion should be illegal all across the country, that no woman should have the right to abortion services. They are upset with the Supreme Court decision of *Roe v. Wade*, and they are frustrated that they can't find a way around it. This is what this is about: trying to deny women access to these kinds of services through maneuvers that are in this bill.

It is absolutely true that what this legislation does is to leave in the hands of her boss the decision about whether or not a woman can have an abortion or not. That is what this does. I want to be clear about one thing so my colleagues understand this. No taxpayer money—that is the law—can be used to subsidize abortion. That is the law of the land: no taxpayer money.

What this does is allow an employer who doesn't agree that abortion should be legal the ability to provide health insurance that doesn't cover it. So, if you are a low-income woman, you are out of luck. You could try to pay for the services out-of-pocket that are affiliated with having an abortion, which is almost impossible, and there could be complications.

It is crazy that we are here, debating a bill like this that would basically remove a woman out of this equation. We have better things to do on this House floor than this bill.

Let's also be clear in that the reason we are doing it now is that the Republican National Convention is next week, and my colleagues are desperate to appeal to the hard-liners in their base. That is what this is all about. This will never become law, and we shouldn't be doing this on the floor.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, it is not true. Conservatives don't ask for bosses to purchase weapons that are protected under the Second Amendment. Why must my Progressive colleagues ask private citizens to pay for the death of a child?

I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK), the sponsor of the underlying legislation.

Mrs. BLACK. I thank my colleague for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the rule to allow for the consideration of my bill, S. 304, the Conscience Protection Act.

The Members of this body represent a broad array of views on matters of life

and abortion. But, surely, we can all at least agree on this: that nobody should ever be forced to participate in the act of abortion against one's will. That is what my legislation is about.

As it stands today, the conscience rights of pro-life Americans are not being consistently upheld. As a matter of fact, nurses have been required to assist in abortions despite their moral objections, and States like California and New York are now requiring every insurance plan, including those by churches and Christian universities, to include elective abortion coverage. This is wrong.

Madam Speaker, I am a nurse. I have been so for more than 45 years, and I still keep my license today. I love my job, but I would never sacrifice my view on the sanctity of life in order to keep it, and I shouldn't have to. Being an American has always meant experiencing the freedom to live according to one's deeply held beliefs at home, at work, and in the public square. My bill simply ensures that that will remain the case.

Think about it this way: a search of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD returns over 1,300 results for the phrase "right to choose." My colleagues across the aisle use that term often. Of course, their argument leaves no choice for the unborn child in the womb, but it stands to reason that if politicians will protect that right to choose, then they must protect the other right to choose as well, the right not to be a forced partner in the practice of abortion. That is simply what my bill would do.

The government recognizes the importance of protecting conscience rights in other arenas: ObamaCare prohibits government discrimination against entities that do not participate in assisted suicide, and Federal employees are not required to participate in Federal death penalty executions. Why should abortion be any different?

Madam Speaker, if Americans can't abide by their own consciences, particularly on a matter of a deeply held belief such as this, then we have lost one of our most basic freedoms there is.

Just to reiterate that which has already been said, this bill does not change the law of today on abortion. It does not. I challenge my colleagues to show me in the language of the bill where it does. It will remain exactly the way it is. This bill does not affect women's access to abortion. As a matter of fact, even in the bill, we make sure that that access is still there in the bill's language, and this bill does not affect employers in the services that they give to their employees.

Today, we can change this. I urge a "yes" vote on the rule.

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

It is frustrating to listen to this debate because, apparently, facts don't matter. The fact of the matter is that this bill is not needed to protect

healthcare providers from being forced to provide or to participate in the provisions of abortion. Healthcare providers already have those protections under current law. What this bill does is to seek to empower a woman's boss to decide whether or not she can have access to abortion services—a woman's boss.

By the way, the health insurance that is being provided is not taxpayer-funded health care; it is health insurance that the woman herself pays into. She pays into health insurance, but her boss decides—if circumstances arose in which she thought, in order to protect her life or in extenuating circumstances, that she wanted to have an abortion—whether or not she could have that, whether or not it would be covered. That is what this is. This is about trying to deny women—in this case, mostly low-income women—the ability to have access to abortion services.

It is really kind of an underhanded attempt by my colleagues to get at *Roe v. Wade*, which I know they don't like. But that is the law of the land. They are trying to make it so that women cannot have access to safe abortion services if circumstances so call for that.

I just find this whole debate to be so out of touch with what the facts are. Again, existing policies already permit certain entities, like hospitals, to refuse to perform abortions, and most of these policies explicitly permit the refusal on the basis of religious or moral objection. What this does is to go a step further. It seeks to make it almost impossible for poor women in particular to be able to have access to the rights that they are guaranteed under the Constitution. I really think that this is a bad thing for us to be considering on the floor.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, my colleague is correct. This debate is far from the facts, but it is not on our side of the aisle. When you say something wrong, repeating it doesn't make it correct. This bill has nothing to do with abortion access. That is a fact. It has to do with conscience rights, period.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY).

Mr. BOUSTANY. Madam Speaker, as a physician, I took an oath to save lives, to protect lives, and as a heart surgeon, I worked day and night to save lives, to protect life at every step of the way. I believe that the oath I took way back when I finished medical school meant protecting all stages of life.

Healthcare providers who share this belief should not be forced to act against their consciences by participating in or by facilitating an abortion. Current law prevents discrimination against healthcare providers who do not wish to participate in abortions. Unfortunately, the Department of Health and Human Services' Office for

Civil Rights refuses to enforce this policy in its taking years, oftentimes, to consider complaints of conscience rights violations. That is just wrong. It is wrong.

The Conscience Protection Act will provide the healthcare community—doctors, nurses, hospitals, and insurers alike—with the right to seek their day in court when the administration fails to enforce existing law. Americans should never be forced to violate their conscience rights in order to do their jobs.

I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying legislation.

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

Today, we are dealing with two pieces of legislation on this rule: one that would deny women's rights and another that would deny consumers' rights in terms of this inadequate GMO labeling bill.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from the Consumers Union, which is opposed to the GMO labeling bill. I include in the RECORD a letter that opposes this legislation and that is signed by countless consumer and healthcare organizations. I also include in the RECORD a New York Times editorial entitled "A Flawed Approach to Labeling Genetically Modified Food."

CONSUMERS UNION, POLICY & ACTION

FROM CONSUMER REPORTS,

Yonkers, NY, July 12, 2016.

*House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN SLAUGHTER: Consumers Union, the policy and mobilization arm of Consumer Reports, urges you to vote no on S. 764, which includes a bill by Senator Roberts and Senator Stabenow related to the disclosure of genetically engineered (GE) food. This bill will not provide consumers with the clear information about GE food that nine out of ten consumers have repeatedly said they want. The legislation would preempt state laws requiring clear, on-package labeling of GE food, replacing them two or more years from now with an ineffective federal disclosure program to be established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Significant questions have been raised about this program's scope.

We have several specific concerns with S. 764. First, this bill, which allows USDA to take two years to develop implementing rules, undermines GE labeling occurring in the marketplace. Labels indicating that a food is produced with genetic engineering are already appearing on store shelves across the country, in compliance with duly enacted state labeling requirements. S. 764 would invalidate laws in states including Vermont, Alaska, Connecticut, and Maine, and produce a legal vacuum for at least two years while USDA writes federal rules.

Second, the definition of "bioengineering" is unclear, and will be subject to interpretation by the Secretary of Agriculture. As a result, there is an active and unresolved dispute about to what extent S. 764 includes or excludes many GE food products from the bill's requirements. This lack of clarity deeply concerns Consumers Union, as we believe that the regulations, should this bill become law, should be very broad in scope.

There are other significant problems with the bill's coverage. For example, while the bill does cover some products containing both GE ingredients and meat, it specifically

exempts any food where meat is the main ingredient, even if the food product contains other ingredients that are genetically engineered.

Third, S. 764 allows companies to employ methods of disclosure that are difficult to use, are not available to all consumers, and put rural, older and low income consumers at a disadvantage. The bill allows for disclosure via QR codes, designed to be scanned by a smartphone. Scanning a QR code may not be feasible for numerous consumers who are unfamiliar with the technology or who lack a smartphone, as three out of four older Americans and about half of rural residents do. As QR codes are already used for many purposes on packages, their presence is not a flag—it does not constitute a *de facto* or easily recognizable indication that a product contains GE ingredients.

Consumers express a clear preference for labels visible to the naked eye. Nearly nine out of ten in a recent survey favored printed, on-package information over scannable bar codes for labels indicating whether food at the grocery store contains GE ingredients, and only 8% preferred the scannable code. Other methods in the legislation that do not involve scannable codes would be significantly more difficult for consumers to use. Navigating a corporate website or dialing a customer call center would each require consumers to go through a multi-step process simply to determine if a food contains GE ingredients.

While Consumers Union agrees with the goal of establishing a uniform national standard for disclosure of GE food ingredients, this bill does not accomplish that goal. In fact, it does the opposite—prohibiting states from exercising their ability to protect consumers through labels while failing to create a credible, clear, unambiguous federal labeling requirement. Furthermore, this bill creates hurdles for consumers to determine quickly and easily while shopping if a product contains GE ingredients.

Consumers have said overwhelmingly that they want GE food to be labeled as such, and states have responded to their requests. The House should not disregard these views by eliminating state laws relating to GE food labeling and replacing them with a vague program that gives USDA excessive latitude in implementation. We therefore urge you to vote no on S. 764, and instead encourage you to continue working toward a uniform solution that serves the interests of both food producers and consumers.

Sincerely,

JEAN HALLORAN,  
*Director, Food Policy Initiatives.*

JULY 11, 2016.

*House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.*

Re GMO Labeling Bill—OPPOSE

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the undersigned food safety, farm, environmental, and consumer advocacy organizations and food corporations, and the millions of members we represent across the United States, we strongly oppose the new Roberts/Stabenow legislation on GMO food labeling. The bill was passed by the Senate last week and is expected to come to the House floor this week.

The process that created this legislation has been profoundly undemocratic and a violation of basic legislative practice. The bill addresses a critical issue for the American public, yet it was neither subject to a single hearing nor any testimony whatsoever. Rather, the bill's preemption of the democratically decided-upon labeling laws of several states, and seed laws of numerous states and municipalities, is the result of non-transparent "bargaining" between two senators and industry interest groups.

As explained in more detail below, we oppose the bill because it is actually a non-la-

beling bill under the guise of a mandatory labeling bill. It exempts major portions of current and future GMO foods from labeling; it is on its face discriminatory against low income, rural and elderly populations; it is a gross violation of the sovereignty of numerous states around the nation; and it provides no enforcement against those who violate the law.

(1) No mandatory standards—The Senate bill itself prescribes no mandatory standards for GMO labeling. Rather, it preempts the labeling laws of several states including Vermont, Connecticut, Maine and Alaska based exclusively on a multi-year discretionary process determined solely by an as of yet unknown, future USDA Secretary.

(2) A vast number of current and future GE foods will be exempt from any labeling—Either intentionally, or through poor drafting and lack of scientific expertise, the novel definition of "bioengineering" under the bill would exclude from labeling a vast number of current foods produced with genetic engineering, including those where the "modification" is "found in nature," those in which technology cannot as yet detect the novel genetic material, and foods made with non in vitro recombinant DNA techniques, such as new generations of food made with RNAi and so-called "gene-editing" techniques. In fact, 99% of all GMO food COULD be exempt from labeling as the bill leaves it entirely up to a future USDA Secretary to determine what "amount" of GMO ingredients in a food qualifies it for labeling. If that Secretary were to decide on a high percentage of GMO content, it would exempt virtually all processed GMO foods which comprise more than 99% of all GMO foods on the market.

(3) Discrimination against rural, low income and elderly populations—The bill anticipates that GMO labeling will be done primarily through QR codes ("digital" labeling). Because of their lack of access to smart phones, more than 50% of rural and low income populations, and more than 65% of the elderly, will have no access to these labels. This impact will fall disproportionately on minority communities. Millions more that do have smart phones may not be able to access these QR codes because they cannot afford to maintain their data service or their neighborhoods do not have adequate network coverage. The study of the efficacy of QR codes outlined in the bill is to take place significantly AFTER any labeling is established and in the marketplace. The results of such a study, if any, may take many years to clarify and codify. Such a "study" provision is clearly not sufficient to absolve the bill of an unconstitutional discriminatory impact.

(4) Violation of State sovereignty by specifically preempting GMO seed laws and potentially numerous other laws and regulations—The bill not only preempts state food labeling laws, but also specifically preempts GMO seed labeling laws, such as those in Vermont and Virginia that are designed to help farmers determine what seeds to buy and plant. Additionally, either intentionally or through poor drafting, the bill could be interpreted to be a preemption of more than 100 different state and municipal laws and regulations throughout the nation.

(5) No enforcement against those who violate mandatory GMO labeling—The bill provides no civil or criminal penalties whatsoever against those not in compliance with GMO labeling requirements. The bill specifically excludes the capacity of the USDA to order any recall of misbranded food, even in cases where a product has been produced with genetic engineering but the corporation involved purposely decides to violate the law and not label.

For this and other reasons, including the bill's definitions being in direct conflict with regulations under the National Organic Food

Production Act, the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and the international Codex Alimentarius, the undersigned organizations and companies urge you to VOTE NO on this misguided, inherently discriminatory bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Center for Food Safety, Food and Water Watch, Abundance Cooperative Market, Beyond Pesticides, Biosafety Alliance, Cedar Circle Farm and Education Center, Central Park West CSA, Citizens for GMO Labeling, Council for Responsible Genetics, Crop CSA, Crush Wine and Spirits, Dr. Bronner's, East New York Farms, Empire State Consumer Project, Family Farm Defenders, Farm Aid, Food Democracy Now.

Foundation Earth, Friends of the Earth, Genesis Farm, Greenpeace, GMO Action Alliance, GMO Free NY, GMO Free USA, GMO Inside, Good Earth Natural Foods, iEat Green, LLC, Institute for Responsible Technology, International Center for Technology Assessment, Katchkie Farm, Keep the Soil in Organic Coalition, Kezialain Farm.

Label GMOs, LIC Brewery, Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, Midwest Organic & Sustainable Education Service, Miskell's Premium Organics, Moms Across America, National Family Farm Coalition, National Organic Coalition, Nature's Path, Nine Mile Market, Non-GMO Project, Nutiva, Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance, Northeast Organic Farming Association, Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York, Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Hampshire, Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont, NYC H20.

Oregon Right to Know, Organic Consumers Association, Organic Farmers' Agency for Relationship Marketing, Inc., Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association, Our Family Farms, PCC Natural Markets, Pesticide Action Network North America, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Presence Marketing, Regeneration Vermont, Riverside-Salem United Church of Christ/Disciples of Christ, Rodale Institute, Rumiano Cheese Company.

Rural Advancement Foundation International, Rural Advancement Foundation International USA, Rural Vermont, Sierra Club, Slow Food California, Slow Food Hudson Valley, Slow Food North Shore, Slow Food USA, Soil Not Oil Coalition, Sunnyside CSA, The Cornucopia Institute, The Organic & Non-GMO Report, U.S. Public Interest Research Group, Vermont Public Interest Research Group, Vermont Right to Know GMOs Coalition, Wood Prairie Family Farm.

[The New York Times, July 6, 2016]

A FLAWED APPROACH TO LABELING  
GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD

(By the Editorial Board)

The Senate is expected to vote as early as Thursday on a bill that would require businesses to label genetically modified foods. Unfortunately, it would allow companies to use confusing electronic codes for scanning instead of simple, clear labels.

This bill, a bipartisan compromise negotiated by Senator Pat Roberts, Republican of Kansas, and Senator Debbie Stabenow, Democrat of Michigan, is being pushed through Congress because some lawmakers from farm states want to pre-empt a Vermont law that requires labeling for some genetically modified foods that went into effect on July 1 (Vermont is giving companies six months to comply) and to prevent other states from enacting similar laws. The Senate bill follows an failed effort in March to block state labeling laws. The House passed a bill last year

that would pre-empt states from enforcing such laws.

While most scientists say that genetically modified foods do not pose a risk to human health, consumers should have a right to more information about what they are eating. Polls have found that a vast majority of Americans favor mandatory labels. Dozens of countries, including all 28 members of the European Union and Australia, already require similar disclosures.

Researchers have found that labels do not dissuade people from consuming genetically engineered food, which has been a big worry of farm groups and businesses. It is no surprise then that some companies, like Campbell Soup, have voluntarily agreed to label their products.

The biggest problem with the Senate bill is that—instead of requiring a simple label, as the Vermont law does—it would allow food companies to put the information in electronic codes that consumers would have to scan with smartphones or at scanners installed by grocery stores. The only reason to do this would be to make the information less accessible to the public.

Another problem is that the bill might not cover some kinds of genetic engineering. The Food and Drug Administration warned that the bill “would result in a somewhat narrow scope of coverage”—for example, food that includes oil made from genetically engineered soybeans might not need to be labeled.

The bill’s sponsors, however, contend that under the Department of Agriculture’s analysis, the bill would require labeling of products that contain genetically engineered soybeans and refined oils. This lack of clarity is troubling, and certainly needs to be resolved. Exempting large categories of genetically modified foods would make the labels useless.

In addition to Vermont, labeling laws have been passed in Connecticut and Maine, but those measures will go into effect only if neighboring states adopt similar legislation. Clearly, a strong federal standard would be preferable to a patchwork of state rules. But the Senate bill needs more work.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH).

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, Vermont’s GMO labeling law, Act 120, was signed into law in 2014 after years of hearings, testimony, and debate. It was the first-in-the-Nation GMO labeling law, but Americans should understand that 64 nations around the world have GMO labeling. That law was passed by a vote of 28-2 in the Vermont Senate and by 114-30 in the House. It garnered support from Republicans and Democrats. The reason it did is that labeling is simply giving consumers information that they can use in deciding whether they want to buy a particular product or not. GMO labeling tells consumers whether the product contains GMOs.

Some of its opponents oppose this largely because they think consumers aren’t entitled to that information even though they believe that GMOs are tremendous. But if they want to brag about GMOs, why don’t they want to label GMO products so consumers can make their own decisions? Now what we have is a situation in which the legislation we are going to be considering says that we will put a label on but not one that you can read.

The label that would be ascribed would allow manufacturers to decide to put on “GMO contained herein”—and that is in English—just like a calorie label or how much salt is in there.

It would also give them the option of using, in effect, a barcode whereby, when you are shopping and you have got to get home to make dinner and you have got to take a son or a daughter out to a play practice or to a sports game, you have to take your iPhone, scan the barcode, go to a Web site, and then investigate the Web site as to whether or not that can of black beans contains GMOs. Who has time to do that? How is that a practical option?

The other option for the company is to put on a 1-800 number, where you are probably getting a call center overseas, and you are talking to somebody about the beans that you are buying at the co-op in Burlington. Folks who are busy mountain women don’t have time to do that, so let’s get real.

This bill that the Senate has sent over is dumb. If you want to label something, use English. That is all you have to do, and we should accept the fact for our consumers, the people we represent. If they want to know something, why not tell them?

I applaud Campbell Soup for deciding it is just going to put GMO labels on the products and will let the consumers decide. Let’s kill this bill. Let’s get a national standard that uses English.

□ 1330

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

I appreciate so much my colleague from Vermont being concerned about the time that mountain women have for looking at their beans.

I want to tell you, we have been eating genetically modified food since the beginning of time, Mr. Speaker, all of us have. Anybody who raises a garden knows that you collect your good seeds, and you try to use them over and over and over again because you have a good product.

People have been modifying food genetically, again, from the beginning of time. We try to breed good cattle with good cattle. We have been doing that since we have had any sense about what was good and what was bad in terms of our food. It has been going on a long time.

Guess what?

I just love my heirloom tomatoes, and I am looking forward to a whole bunch of them this summer.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to talk about S. 764, the GMO labeling requirements. The labeling requirement provides flexibility to food manufacturers by giving them a variety of options to meet disclosure requirements.

My colleague talked about the Vermont Legislature being bipartisan. The Senate bill was very bipartisan. For instance, a product may have a label with text explaining its contents or it may have a QR code or an electronic link to identify bioengineered

products. The food manufacturer chooses their preferred method of disclosure.

To ensure ease of use, S. 764 requires the U.S. Department of Agriculture to conduct a study to identify potential roadblocks consumers may encounter when trying to access the disclosure information. The measure allows food manufacturers of all sizes adequate time to comply with the law’s requirements and provides additional protections for small businesses.

This bill represents a bipartisan compromise on this issue, and I commend this rule and the underlying bill to my colleagues.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I would just point out to the gentlewoman that 88 percent of consumers said they would prefer on-package labeling for genetically engineered food rather than some QR code.

Again, what this bill is about is trying to appease industry. I would say to my friends, if you want to know why we are appealing to certain industry, just follow the money because that is how so many pieces of legislation in this Republican-controlled House are crafted.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question. And if we do, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up the bipartisan no fly, no buy legislation, which would allow the Attorney General to bar the sale of firearms and explosives to those on the FBI’s terrorist watch list.

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, to discuss our proposal, I yield 2½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I urge a “no” vote on the previous question so that our ranking member can bring up his amendment to prevent suspected terrorists, people who are on the FBI’s no-fly list, people who can’t fly on an airplane because the FBI has determined it is too dangerous to the American public to allow these people to fly. But under existing law, they can legally buy a gun of their choice at a gun store. That is wrong. We all know it is wrong. Eighty-five percent of the American people believe that is wrong and support this measure.

We believe that terrorists, that criminals, domestic abusers, and the dangerously mentally ill should not be able to have easy access to guns. Background checks and the no fly, no buy legislation are the two ways to make it tougher for them to get guns.

We are getting ready, under the Republican leadership, to run out of here and take weeks' worth of vacation without addressing this issue. I think it is shameful.

We have had 34,000 deaths by someone using a gun since the Sandy Hook tragedy 3½ years ago. We have had 1,196 mass shootings since the Sandy Hook tragedy. We have held 31 moments of silence on this floor for people who have been killed in mass shootings, but we have had zero votes on any gun violence prevention legislation. That is wrong.

The background check bill that we have before us is a bipartisan bill. As a matter of fact, there are 197 Members of Congress who are the coauthors of that bill, Democrats and Republicans. Ninety percent of the American people support it.

Why won't the Republican leadership allow that bill to be voted on here on the floor?

Every day there is another gun violence tragedy. We just had yesterday the memorial for the tragic situation in Dallas, Texas, where five police officers were murdered by someone using a gun.

It is not a partisan issue. When somebody takes a gun and goes to kill someone, they don't ask if they are Democrats or if they are Republicans. We need to put the partisan strife aside and deal with this. We need to come to this floor and work on solutions that will help keep the people who sent us to Washington, D.C., safe. It is long past time.

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

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, right outside of my district, two individuals with AK-47s held up an armored car. They shot one of the guards, and they took off and ended up in my district where police stopped them. One of them shot at the local police officer. He was able to hit him with his car. They arrested him. The other one with his AK-47 took off on the run. Two SWAT teams, the FBI, and the local police were out there trying to hunt this guy down with an AK-47.

This is personal. This could happen in any of our districts. It is real personal for me because one of those cops looking for this guy was my son. I don't want my son or any of your sons having to go up against some criminal with any kind of gun, the least of which would be a long gun that would pierce most of the protection they have.

Let's bring this bill to the floor. Let's get this thing done.

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

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

The Republicans are about to leave town, and I don't know whether to be happy or sad. Sad because there are so many important issues that we need to consider here that we are not doing, whether it is gun violence or dealing with the Zika virus, but happy in the sense that we won't have to deal with terrible pieces of legislation like the two bills that are being brought before us under this rule.

The so-called Conscience Protection Act is not about protecting anybody's conscience. We already have a law that does that. This is about denying a woman access to abortion services. This is about empowering a woman's boss to make the decision as to whether or not she could have access to abortion services.

When the gentlewoman says, "no, it is not; no, it is not," I would remind her that when you deny someone insurance coverage for a healthcare procedure, in most cases, that means that you deny them access because a woman, especially a low-income woman, couldn't afford those services.

So if you think that a woman's boss ought to be in control of her healthcare, then vote for this terrible bill. But I hope a majority of my colleagues, both Democrats and Republicans, will see through this and reject it.

The second bill is this terrible GMO labeling bill. As my colleague from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) said: If you want a labeling bill, then have a labeling bill. Label it. Make it clear to people. Give consumers the access to the information that they overwhelmingly want.

It is beyond the ability of the people that run this Congress to give the people of this country what they want. The vast majority want transparency, and, instead, we get this GMO bill that is confusing, that will make it impossible for some consumers to have access to information about whether or not a product contains GMOs or not.

This is not about the safety or the science of GMOs. This is about consumers' right to know. I mean, give people the information so they can make their own decisions.

Who are we in this Congress to deny people the information that they want?

It is about time we do what the American people want.

Vote "no" on the rule. Vote "no" on both of these pieces of legislation. Vote "no" on the previous question so we can finally have a debate on gun safety.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I would like to remind my colleague—perhaps he has forgotten—that the House dealt with the Zika crisis and the Zika virus. We sent a bill over to the Senate, and it was the Democrat Members of the Senate that prevented that bill from being debated and voted on in the Senate. We have done our job

in the House of Representatives on a bipartisan basis. We are doing our job in the House of Representatives. I believe we passed 24 bills in this House on Monday alone. So we are doing our job, Mr. Speaker. We have problems with our colleagues' counterparts on the other side of the Capitol.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to say again, the S. 304 does not stop a woman's choice. It is important, though, for us to understand what is at stake if we don't pass S. 304, the Conscience Protection Act. Not only will the State of California be allowed to continue to violate Federal law, but it is likely that other States will follow suit with similarly drafted rules and regulations, forcing more and more churches, religious charities, and employers to decide between honoring the tenets of their faith and helping their employees by providing health insurance.

Further, S. 304 allows healthcare providers to file a civil right of action when they face discrimination by government or subsidiary agencies. Currently, the only recourse a healthcare provider has available is to appeal to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights. Recall that this was the same office that conveniently reinterpreted the Weldon Amendment, allowing the California Department of Managed Health Care to force churches to pay for elective abortions.

Additionally, the Office of Civil Rights has been notoriously slow to adjudicate complaints. The groups who filed the appeal in the California case waited more than 2 years for a decision. And a nurse who was forced to participate in an abortion and then required to reassemble the parts of a dismembered baby waited 3 years for her complaint to be resolved. That is unconscionable.

It has become clear that healthcare providers cannot rely on HHS and the Office of Civil Rights to defend healthcare providers from discrimination. S. 304 provides this protection and gives these entities recourse when they choose not to participate in or facilitate abortion.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, this rule also provides for consideration of a motion to concur with the Senate amendment to the House amendment to S. 764, GMO labeling requirements. This bill leverages Congress' authority to regulate interstate commerce and will establish a uniform standard for labeling bioengineered foods that is easy for consumers to access and understand.

This standard provides food manufacturers with regulatory certainty and a single, national standard with which they must comply, rather than a patchwork of dozens of State and local regulations that vary from a complex list of details to no labeling at all.

Mr. Speaker, it is disappointing, though not surprising, to hear my colleagues criticize the Conscience Protection Act. Congress has a long history of providing freedom of conscience protections, and this bill ensures that healthcare providers are protected and can continue serving their patients, customers, and communities as they have been, without threat of government coercion or retaliation.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this rule and the underlying bills.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 822 OFFERED BY  
MR. MCGOVERN

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

SEC. 4. 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. 1076) to increase public safety by permitting the Attorney General to deny the transfer of a firearm or the issuance of firearms or explosives licenses to a known or suspected dangerous terrorist. 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 the Judiciary. After general 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. 5. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 1076.

#### 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.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 820 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 5538.

Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PITTINGER) kindly take the chair.

□ 1344

#### IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 5538) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes, with Mr. PITTINGER (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Wednesday, July 13, 2016, amendment No. 75 printed in House Report 114-683, offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) had been disposed of.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in House Report 114-683 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 32 by Mr. GRIJALVA of Arizona.

Amendment No. 33 by Mr. POLIS of Colorado.

Amendment No. 34 by Mr. LOWENTHAL of California.

Amendments En Bloc by Mr. MCNERNEY of California.

Amendment No. 41 by Mr. GRIJALVA of Arizona.

Amendment No. 43 by Mrs. BLACKBURN of Tennessee.

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

#### AMENDMENT NO. 32 OFFERED BY MR. GRIJALVA

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

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

#### RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 177, noes 249, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 433]

#### AYES—177

Adams	Brownley (CA)	Clark (MA)
Aguilar	Bustos	Clarke (NY)
Bass	Butterfield	Clay
Beatty	Capps	Cleaver
Becerra	Capuano	Clyburn
Bera	Cárdenas	Cohen
Beyer	Carney	Connolly
Blumenauer	Carson (IN)	Conyers
Bonamici	Cartwright	Courtney
Boyle, Brendan	Castor (FL)	Cuellar
F.	Castro (TX)	Cummings
Brady (PA)	Chu, Judy	Davis (CA)
Brown (FL)	Cioccine	Davis, Danny