Crawford	Johnson (SD)	Rodgers (WA)
Crenshaw	Jordan	Roe, David P.
Cuellar	Joyce (OH)	Rogers (AL)
Curtis	Joyce (PA)	Rogers (KY)
Davidson (OH)	Katko	Rose, John W.
Davis, Rodney	Keller	Rouzer
DesJarlais	Kelly (MS)	Roy
Diaz-Balart	Kelly (PA)	Rutherford
Duffy	King (IA)	Scalise
Duncan	King (NY)	Schweikert
Dunn	Kinzinger	Scott, Austin
Emmer	Kustoff (TN)	Sensenbrenner
Estes	LaHood	Shimkus
Ferguson	LaMalfa	Simpson
Fleischmann	Lamborn	Smith (MO)
Fletcher	Latta	Smith (NE)
Flores	Lesko	Smucker
Fortenberry	Long	Spano
Foxx (NC)	Loudermilk	Stauber
Fulcher	Lucas	Steil
Gaetz	Luetkemeyer	Steube
Gallagher	Marshall	Stewart
Gianforte	Massie	Stivers
Gibbs	Mast	Taylor
Gohmert	McCarthy	Thompson (PA)
Gonzalez (OH)	McCaul	Thornberry
Gooden	McClintock	Timmons
Gosar	McHenry	Tipton
Granger	McKinley	Turner
Graves (GA)	Meadows	Upton
Graves (LA)	Meuser	Vela
Graves (MO)	Miller	Wagner
Green (TN)	Mitchell	Walberg
Griffith	Moolenaar	Walden
Grothman	Mooney (WV)	Walker
Guest	Mullin	Walorski
Guthrie	Newhouse	Waltz
Hagedorn	Norman	Watkins
Harris	Nunes	Weber (TX)
Hartzler	Olson	Webster (FL)
Hern, Kevin	Palazzo	Wenstrup
Herrera Beutler	Palmer	Westerman
Hice (GA)	Pence	Williams
Higgins (LA)	Perry	Wilson (SC)
Hill (AR)	Peterson	Wittman
Holding	Posey	Womack
Hollingsworth	Ratcliffe	Woodall
Hudson	Reed	Wright
Hunter	Reschenthaler	Young
Hurd (TX)	Rice (SC)	Zeldin
Johnson (LA)	Riggleman	
Johnson (OH)	Roby	

NOT VOTING—14

Abraham	Correa	Marchant
Baird	Cummings	McEachin
Castro (TX)	Gabbard	Rice (NY)
Clyburn	Gonzalez (TX)	Yoho
Collins (NY)	Huizenga	

□ 1202

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, at the end of a long vote series today, I unintentionally voted nay for H.R. 1146, the Arctic Cultural and Coastal Plan Protection Act, on rollcall number 530. Had I been able to correct my vote at that time, I would have voted "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Miss RICE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I was necessarily absent from votes on Thursday September 12, 2019. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 526; "nay" on rollcall No. 527; "nay" on rollcall No. 528; "nay" on rollcall No. 529; and "yea" on rollcall No. 530.

DIRECTING THE CLERK TO PROVIDE AUDIO BACKUP FILE OF DEPOSITION OF ROGER J. STONE JR.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a resolution (H. Res. 553) directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to provide a copy of the on-the-record portions of the audio backup file of the transcribed interview of Roger J. Stone Jr. conducted by the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence on September 26, 2017, to the prosecuting attorneys in the case of the United States of America v. Stone, No. 1:19-cr-00018–ABJ (D.D.C), and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 553

Whereas on September 26, 2017, Roger J. Stone Jr. appeared in Washington, DC, and was interviewed by the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives in connection with that Committee's investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 United States election;

Whereas the Department of Justice requested in a December 14, 2018, letter to the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence that the Committee provide a transcript of its September 26, 2017, interview with Mr. Stone, as well as any other written submissions or correspondence from Mr. Stone or his attorneys before and after his interview;

Whereas on December 20, 2018, pursuant to a bipartisan Committee vote on that date authorizing the release of Executive Session materials, the then-Chair and ranking minority member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence jointly sent the Department of Justice the transcript of Mr. Stone's September 26, 2017, interview, as well as an enumerated list of related materials;

Whereas on January 24, 2019, Mr. Stone was indicted by a grand jury on seven counts, including one count of obstruction of an official proceeding, in violation of sections 1505 and 2 of title 18, United States Code, and five counts of making false statements in violation of sections 1001(a)(2) and 2 of title 18, United States Code;

Whereas the Department of Justice requested via letter on August 20, 2019, that the House voluntarily provide to it a copy of the on-the-record portions of the audio backup file of Mr. Stone's September 26, 2017, transcribed interview;

Whereas by the privileges and rights of the House of Representatives, an audio backup file of Mr. Stone's transcribed interview may not be taken from the possession or control of the Clerk of the House of Representatives by mandate of process of the article III courts of the United States, and may not be provided pursuant to requests by the court or the parties to *United States of America v. Stone* except at the direction of the House; and

Whereas it is the judgment of the House of Representatives that, in the particular circumstances of this case, providing a copy of the on-the-record portions of the audio backup file of Mr. Stone's transcribed interview to the prosecuting attorneys in the case of *United States v. Stone* would promote the ends of justice in a manner consistent with the privileges and rights of the House: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives directs the Clerk of the House to provide for use at trial a copy of the on-the-record portions of the audio backup file of the transcribed interview of Roger J. Stone Jr. that was conducted by the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives on September 26, 2017, to the prosecuting attorneys in the case of *United States of America v. Stone*, No. 1:19-cr-00018–ABJ (D.D.C.).

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Miss Kaitlyn Roberts, one of his secretaries.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), for the purpose of inquiring of the majority leader the schedule for the week to come.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, the House will meet at 12 p.m. for morning-hour debate, and 2 p.m. for legislative business, with votes postponed until 6:30 p.m. On Wednesday and Thursday of next week, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate, and 12 p.m. for legislative business. On Friday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business, and last votes are expected no later than 3 p.m.

We will consider several bills under suspension of the rules. The complete list of suspension bills will be announced by the close of business tomorrow.

The House, Mr. Speaker, will consider a clean continuing resolution to fund the government past September 30. While the House did its work, and sent 10 appropriation bills to the Senate, funding 96 percent of the government—the first time that is been done in over three decades—I am disappointed that the Senate failed to pass a single appropriation bill. Not one.

Not only that, they haven't filed any until just the other day when we got back from the summer break.

I am disappointed that the Senate failed to introduce a single appropriation bill for the first time in more than three decades. So that while we were very successful, the Senate failed to move forward.

Therefore, as we wait for them to complete their work so that we can begin conference negotiations, a continuing resolution will be necessary to prevent another government shutdown like the one we experienced earlier this year.

In addition, the House will consider H.R. 1423, Forced Arbitration Injustice Repeal Act, called the FAIR Act, and the legislation would eliminate forced arbitration in employment, consumer, and civil rights cases so that Americans, as they have under the Constitution, would have the right to seek redress of grievances through the courts.

This would restore access to justice for millions of Americans who are currently locked out of the court system and are forced to settle their disputes against companies in a private system of arbitration.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, as it relates to the funding of government, I know that it is important that as we finally got an agreement a few months ago to come up with a 2-year budget process where we agreed on numbers of funding, especially for the Defense Department which needs that certainty, they don't want these short-term CRs. They need the long-term certainty so they can go out and acquire the kind of equipment we need to keep our men and women in uniform safe to effectively do their jobs in a safe manner.

One of the things I would point out, as the gentleman talked about the Senate process, let's be clear that the House bills that were passed out moved on a very partisan basis. There were no bipartisan agreements as you passed the bills out of the House.

The Senate does work differently. The Senate has to have a 60-vote margin to get any bills moved, so they have been in negotiations to try to get, not a partisan agreement but a bipartisan agreement, and, unfortunately, so far, they have had a lot of problems with some of the Senate Democrats who try to put poison pills in those budget talks that would ultimately not yield something that can get signed into law and would not comply with the 2-year budget agreement that we reached.

So I would encourage both on our side, there should have been a bipartisan agreement on the bills that are moved through, and at least there are some talks going on, but they haven't resulted in bipartisan legislation that can get signed by the President.

The Senate needs to do the same thing. And so we are beyond the time for partisan differences. Now is the time where we need to come together and agree on those things that we can put in a bill that can get signed into law. Drop this idea of these poison pills that everybody knows will gum up the works. Let's get the certainty that we deserve for a full budget process for the year.

We are not there yet. If we have to do a short-term budget agreement or short-term CR, then that is one thing that we may consider next week. We haven't seen the final details, of course. It would have to be clean with no poison pills attached to it. But, hopefully, that yields talks that are truly bipartisan, which we haven't, unfortunately, seen to this point.

So I would hope that we can get beyond that next week. It gives us more time to have real negotiations that can result in something that can get signed into law and give certainty to our men and women in uniform and all of the other agencies that rely on us doing that work on a bipartisan basis.

I would like to shift gears and ask the gentleman about the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, USMCA. I yield to the gentleman if he has something to add to that.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I understand the gentleman said a lot of things about reaching bipartisan agreements and all of this sort of stuff, and the Senate needed 60 votes. They didn't introduce a bill. Not a single appropriation bill was introduced.

□ 1215

They had the same 60-vote requirement last year, and they passed a lot of bills last year. The reason they didn't pass bills is that the President of the United States wouldn't come to the table and agree on caps. They could have done the same thing we did.

We are an independent branch of government. We are the Article I branch of government. We appropriate money. We spend money. But the Senate has not done its work.

If you brought the bills to the floor and couldn't get 60 votes, we get it. But I will tell my friend that there is great frustration. For the first time since my friend has been a Member of the Congress, we passed 96 percent of the funding for government by June 30, otherwise known as 3 full months before the end of the fiscal year, giving the Senate a lot of time.

But, no, we had to wait and wait and wait until the President sent down Secretary Mnuchin, and we finally made an agreement on 302(a)s, in other words, the caps, what we were going to spend.

With all due respect to all this talk about bipartisanship and that we need to work together, that is, of course, true. It was not true in the Congresses when my friend's party was in the majority. The Republicans passed partisan bills, and they went over to the Senate. The Senate didn't take them, and we went back and forth.

There has been no back and forth. We did our work, and although the Republicans disagreed with the numbers publicly, privately, very frankly, a lot of my friend's Members told me the numbers were pretty good numbers, and they liked them, including defense. We passed a Defense bill with a substantial increase for our troops, readiness, operations, and training.

I say that to Mr. Whip not to criticize my friend but to simply say that of all this verbiage about being nice to get together and do something, the regular order is we pass bills, the Senate passes bills, and then we have a conference. Unfortunately, we have gotten away from that, which I think is very bad for the House, the Senate, and the American people.

We cannot go to conference if the Senate doesn't even pass a bill, doesn't even introduce a bill, waiting on the President of the United States to say, ''Simon says.''

We can't get a bill supported by 90 percent of the American people, comprehensive background checks, which 90 percent, a majority of my friend's party, a majority of my party, and a majority of independents thinks makes common sense. We passed it in February, and we can't even have it on the floor in the United States Senate.

Not only are they not doing appropriations bills, but they are not doing any other bills either. They spend all their time on judges.

We are a little frustrated on this side because we have done our work. Ninety-six percent of government is funded, and, yes, there could have been differences of opinion. They should have passed bills and said, no, we don't agree.

Mr. Speaker, the problem they would have had, I tell my friend, is that they didn't want to have bipartisan bills because, yes, it would have required them to get 60 votes, and they didn't want to make the compromises necessary to get 60 votes.

We are here, just a little more than 15 days before the end of the fiscal year, and the Senate has not passed a single bill while we have funded 96 percent of government. This CR is necessary. Nobody wants to shut down government, I hope. Hopefully, the CR will not have anything that either party will disagree with, and we will extend some things that need to be extended because we haven't acted upon them in a timely fashion. But I am hopeful that the CR will get to the Senate, that we will pass the CR, that there will be no drama, and then, as the gentleman suggests, and I agree with him, that we will sit down in a bipartisan way and try to reach agreement on each 1 of the 12 appropriations bills and either put them separately or in a minibus or omnibus and pass them to fund the government and not have what we had last year and into the first part of 2017, a shutdown of the Government of the United States. That was not good for the people of our country, not good for our government employees, and not good for the Congress of the United States to be unable to do its work, resulting in a shutdown of government.

I appreciate the gentleman's sentiment about doing things in a bipartisan way, but you can't do things in a bipartisan way if they don't come to the floor. If the leader over there doesn't have 60 votes, then he needs to reach a compromise because we need to get our business done. We passed all of our bills. Some were not partisan, I think, in many ways, but there was a determination not to vote for them because we hadn't reached a caps number. I think that was unfortunate because I think, as someone who served on the committee for 23 years, Mr. Speaker, we passed our bills in many, many instances—most instances—in a bipartisan fashion.

I didn't want the comment to go not responded to, in terms of the Senate's refusal and unwillingness to act and do its business. And here we are, not a single bill—not one—has been passed through the committee.

The gentleman's party has the majority on the committee. At least my friend could report them out of committee and then work on getting 60 votes.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, there were a number of items that my friend brought up. I will start with the government shutdown that the gentleman referred to last year. When we were in the majority last year, we passed bipartisan bills to fund over 70 percent of the government prior to October 1—no shutdown—more than 70 percent of the government that we worked with Democrats and President Trump to get an agreement on, including defense, so our men and women in uniform did not have that uncertainty and had that full year of funding. All of that was worked out.

Clearly, we had a difference of agreement over the Homeland Security Department because of funding for border security. The government shutdown was clearly over whether or not we were going to have a secure border and all the things that were involved, including physical barriers. We resolved it, and the President was able to get over $4.5 billion of new money to continue putting that physical security in place to secure our Nation's border. That took a few more months, but we resolved it.

Keep in mind, over 70 percent of the government was fully funded prior to the end of the fiscal year, working with Republicans and Democrats in the House and Senate.

As the gentleman brags about passing over 96 percent of the bills out of the House, it has to be noted that the majority didn't work with Republicans to do it. The easy thing is just to say that we will just talk amongst ourselves, knowing it will never get signed into law. Of course, a partisan bill is not going to get signed into law when you have a President of the different party or when you have a Senate controlled by a different party.

The Senate works differently than us. We can have that debate for another day. We would probably both agree on a lot of the differences we have with how the Senate operates. But because of their 60-vote requirement, they know nothing is going to pass unless they have Republican and Democratic agreement in those negotiations.

Let's be clear about what is bottling up those negotiations. There are Senate Democrats in Democratic leadership on the Democratic side who are offering up things that everybody knows are poison pills that would not get signed into law.

They are at an impasse. They need to break that impasse. That is their issue. But, Mr. Speaker, you can talk to some of the Senate Democrats who are trying to offer up things that everybody knows will not happen or become law or pass over there, but both sides need to come together.

Mr. Speaker, when you pass an NDAA bill—and the gentleman from Maryland knows this. The National Defense Authorization Act is a bill that a Republican-controlled House or a Democratic-controlled House, no matter who has been in charge, we have come together always. Every single year that we have moved an NDAA, it has been bipartisan. This is the first year that the majority broke from that.

The majority passed a partisan bill on defense knowing it was never going to become law but not working with Democrats and breaking the tradition that every year we have followed, that Republicans and Democrats would come together and say that we have all of these other differences—and there are a lot of differences that we have that we need to work through. We might get some; we might not get others. But we put defense on the side and said that this is one where we will come together, Republicans and Democrats in every year we did it, including last year when we were in the majority.

This year, the majority did not. They broke that tradition. It is unfortunate because, again, that will never become law.

My friend can brag they got it done, but they got something done that will never get signed into law and broke a tradition that we have always had that that bill was bipartisan, making sure that we work together to take care of our men and women in uniform in a way that they deserve and in a timely way.

I would hope that we would get those things done before October 1. But we all know what came out of this House is not what is going to be a final product.

Let's work better to get these addressed, working with Members of both parties and the President, who, by the way, did agree with us on the numbers. We are in agreement. The House, the Senate, and the White House have finally agreed on the numbers.

Now it is up to us in the Congress to come to an agreement. It is not just, hey, we passed our bill with just members of our party. It is going to have to mean people work together through those differences as we have done in the past.

Sometimes we disagreed. Seventy percent of government was funded last year prior to October 1. Ultimately, we got agreement on the rest.

Does the gentleman have anything else to say on that before I move on?

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCALISE. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, the defense bill passed this House with almost every Republican voting against it. It was a bill that provided $733 billion, a figure that the Joint Chiefs of Staff suggested publicly. It was a figure that I know personally was a figure that was deemed acceptable by the leadership of the authorizing committee and the appropriating committee on the Republican side. The rhetoric was totally partisan.

We have now made a deal, and we are now going to save defense because we did $5 billion more. The figure last year, of course, was somewhere around $700 billion, a little over.

I will tell my friend that we believe on our side of the aisle that the opposition to the defense bill was totally partisan, no attempt at bipartisanship. Yes, the Republicans had some success in getting bipartisan bills through. Why? Because we were prepared to vote in a bipartisan way.

That is the difference. We were prepared to vote in a bipartisan way. We were prepared to accept my friend's party was the majority.

Mr. Speaker, we understand when you are in the minority you work to get the best objective you think is possible. We did that, and the gentleman, Mr. Speaker, says that they got bipartisan bills done because Democrats voted for them, including me. But I know the number was an acceptable number, and it was a number suggested by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Yet we heard rhetoric after rhetoric of how this was letting down the Defense Department.

What did they do? They made a deal, not $733 billion, $738 billion. My goodness, what an extraordinary difference. They voted against funding the men and women in uniform, funding operations, and funding overseas contingencies.

I hope that we get off this. If you want to talk bipartisan, act bipartisan, Mr. Speaker. Talk is cheap. It was clear that Democrats, in fact, when the Republicans were in the majority, did vote on a number of occasions, not every occasion, for bipartisanship. But you can't have bipartisanship if you don't introduce a bill.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans have the majority in the United States Senate on the committee. They don't need 60 votes in the committee. They don't need 60 percent. They don't need two-thirds. All they need is a simple majority to pass a bill out of committee, as the gentleman pointed out when he said we did fund some pieces of government before. Why? Because we got bipartisan agreement.

□ 1230

And I have never seen, as I say, in three decades, the Senate fail to even introduce an appropriation bill prior to the end of July.

I hope the Senate will move with some degree of alacrity. I hope that we will get to agreement on these 12 bills. I hope that we will fund the government and not have a shutdown, as we had the last time. The first time it has ever happened in a new Congress where the government was shutdown—all over the wall—which a number of Republicans have said is not a useful thing to do.

I won't name them. I am sure the minority whip, the Republican whip,

knows a lot of them. They served in this body. Some are chairman of committees over there now.

So I am hopeful that we will move together on the appropriations process and do our business, do it on time, as we have done here in the House so that the American people can be well-served.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, let's be clear on the funding of government. From last year, we did fund over 70 percent of the government, and we didn't play a partisan game with our Nation's defense.

This bill, the NDAA, you can talk about what both sides should do.

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCALISE. Let me make this point, because you have made some points that aren't completely accurate.

The number we agreed upon—but if you say, Okay, we agree on a certain spending level, that is one part of the debate. But you then go put policies in the bill at that level that undermine, not only our beliefs of what is best for national defense, but what the President needs to do to be able to do his job to secure our border. You did that in the bill knowing that that would make it partisan. It was a bipartisan bill, and then you added provisions, like things that would undermine the ability to secure America's border in that bill knowing it was partisan.

If you took that out, you knew it would have been a bipartisan bill, but you left it in. And that is a pattern we have seen from Speaker PELOSI's majority this year.

We had a bill in the Committee on Energy and Commerce to lower drug prices—a major problem in this country. Republicans and Democrats worked for months and came up with a bill in the committee of jurisdiction to solve the problem and lower drug prices.

And you know what happened? It was a unanimous vote—unanimous vote.

People looking at Congress going, Wow, here in the year 2019, on a major issue like lowering drug prices, Republicans and Democrats came together and figured out a way to lower drug prices, and the vote was unanimous.

You would figure we would put that on suspension the next day to pass it out, so we could get it signed by the President as soon as possible and lower drug prices as soon as possible.

And you know what happened? It just happened a few months ago. As that bill came out of committee unanimously to lower drug prices, the Speaker made a decision that she was going to put a poison pill in it—after it came out of committee, before it was voted on on the House floor—knowing what that would do.

And it immediately became a partisan bill because you put something in that you knew was not going to get Republican support. And so the bill passed out of the House. And you can brag you passed it, but it is not going to go anywhere.

It will not become law, but we had a bill that was unanimous out of committee to lower drug prices. It would be signed into law today if you wouldn't have done that. But you wanted to play political games, and it has happened over and over.

And so you can talk about what you passed, but when there was a bill that was unanimous out of the committee of jurisdiction, where doctors, people in the healthcare professions, people in business, people on both sides of the aisle that know this issue figured out a way to put all of their differences aside and pass a bill to lower drug prices, you had to make that partisan after it came out of committee unanimously.

That is what has been done over and over that undermines the ability for us to get our job done. We could have gotten that done. It could be signed by the President today, and we could all hail that as a major accomplishment.

That is just one example, and it is happened over and over again, and it shouldn't happen that way.

So, yes, we need to move this process along, but we move it along by working together. Defense could have been done in a bipartisan way. The things that were added in that you knew would make it partisan shouldn't have been put in that bill. It had never happened that way before, ever.

We had always passed a bipartisan NDAA bill through the House, and this is the first year that didn't happen. Drug pricing could be solved, but it hasn't happened yet. It should happen. I hope we get it done, but it should have been done in a partisan way when the committee figured out a way to do it unanimously.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) for yielding.

We can discuss all sorts of bills, but we discussed the appropriations process. And the gentleman expressed how they were able to pass 70 percent of funding of the government because they had the Defense bill and the Labor-Health, which are the two biggest bills, passed and signed by the President.

Why were they able to do that, Mr. Speaker, when it requires 60 votes in the Senate? They didn't have 60 votes in the Senate because Democrats acted in a bipartisan way to affect that end.

This year, we have had no opportunity to do that. We have had no opportunity to conference on our bills. Republicans lead the Senate, passed your bills, and if you can't get 60 votes, yes, you would have to compromise in the Senate.

You didn't compromise when you were in charge, frankly, on an awful lot of things that had closed rules, more than any other Congress, so we didn't have an opportunity to even amend.

But that aside, when you claim that you passed those bills you did, and the only reason you could do it is because the Democrats acted in a bipartisan fashion because you did not have the votes to pass them on your own, you needed Democratic votes. Democrats gave you those votes because we knew that in order to get things done you had to move in a bipartisan fashion.

That is the only way you were able to do it. We have not been given the opportunity in the United States Senate because there are no bills yet to consider, except for the last 3 days the bills came forward.

But for the first 9 months of the year, no bills came forward, Mr. Speaker, not one.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I would hope those Senators on both sides of the aisle, as they are having negotiations—and, yeah, they don't have a bill, but they are negotiating. And there are Senators that know that some of the provisions they are insisting upon are things that will not become law because they undermine our Nation's security. And yet, they keep insisting. And so they are not at an agreement, but they need to keep working just like we need to work in a bipartisan way on those issues. And they will get resolved if we do that.

And, again, I think if you go look at the example of what the House Committee on Energy and Commerce did on lowering drug prices, it is a great model to follow.

That bill should have been brought to the floor. That bill should not have been changed by the Speaker at the last minute to become partisan, and now it is not law.

I would like to move on to something that has been troubling that we have been seeing out of the Committee on the Judiciary, and that is this drumbeat towards impeachment. It seems like there is an infatuation by this majority to impeach the President of the United States, whether or not the facts are there. And so there was the Mueller report that went on for years.

And all of these members—chairs of your own committees—saying there was evidence that they had, and it was going to show the President colluded here and there. And then it turned out to be false; there was no collusion.

We know that. The report showed that. Russia tried to interfere with our elections when Barack Obama was President. Maybe they should be investigating why he didn't do more to stop the Russians from trying to interfere with our elections, but there was no collusion.

So instead of saying, Okay, that is it, move on—as the American people would like to see us do—maybe that committee that has jurisdiction over the border, over immigration law, that has serious problems that should be worked out in a bipartisan way, and could be worked out in a bipartisan way, but it is not, because the committee of jurisdiction is infatuated with impeaching the President.

In fact, the chairman of the committee just said today: This is formal

impeachment proceedings. The chairman of the committee said that today, as they are having a hearing on impeaching the President without even evidence to impeach him. There is nothing to impeach him on. They have Articles of Impeachment drawn up with blanks that they are just looking around to fill in on this witch hunt, and they are just going to look and look and look.

Imagine if somebody said, We are going to target a person and we are going to try to indict him. We don't have anything to indict him on, but we are going to write up an indictment and then look around and look around and hope to find something.

And that is what is going on in the Committee on the Judiciary. So they had this hearing today. They changed the rules. They had this big drama. The media is all covering it. The chairman says: This is formal impeachment proceedings.

And then you look at the rules that they brought forward. The rules that they brought forward allow the chairman to do things he can already do. It was a farce. It was a farce to try to appease the radical left base that wants to impeach the President, even though there is nothing to impeach him on. And instead of just giving it up and focusing on their job, the things they should be focused on, they are just going to keep meandering around on this witch hunt.

And I know some in your majority—maybe even the majority leader himself—are trying to distance themselves from it because they know the American people think that it is lunacy to be wasting time trying to impeach the President, even though there is nothing to impeach him on and just driving around on a witch hunt.

And so I guess the real question is, if the chairman of the committee—your chairman—today, said: This is formal impeachment proceedings. He talked about, hopefully, by the end of the year they will vote on Articles of Impeachment—''hopefully,'' by the end of the year.

There is nothing to impeach him on, and yet they are going to actually go out on a witch hunt and say, We are going to look for something, and by the end of the year, we hope to impeach the President.

So I would ask the gentleman: Are you all bringing Articles of Impeachment to the floor? Is the chairman rightly going down an impeachment road? And what exactly are those articles?

What are the Articles of Impeachment, if the committee today—your chairman of your committee—said: This is formal impeachment proceedings? What exactly is the gentleman planning on impeaching the President of the United States on? And are you, if he brings those Articles of Impeachment out of committee—blanks that haven't even been filled in—if they bring them to the floor, or if they move them out of committee by the end of the year, as the chairman hopes, is the gentleman prepared to bring that to the floor of the United States House of Representatives?

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, the chairman of the committee spoke about their process. Their process has been a fact-finding process. That is our responsibility as a Congress. That is his responsibility and the committee's responsibility as a committee.

The majority party claims that they have an agenda for the people, and the people believe we ought to exercise our responsibility. That is what the committee is doing. I do not want to anticipate what the committee's findings will ultimately be nor what the committee's actions will finally be. We will wait to see. But it is exercising its responsibility as a coequal branch of government as provided in the Constitution.

I am not going to get into an argument, Mr. Speaker, about the premises in the Mueller report, other than to say I disagree with the characterization made by the Republican whip. That will be for another day to argue that.

The committee is doing its duty and it will continue to do so. And if it decides that that requires further action, my presumption is it will pursue that as well.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, but I don't think the question has been answered. Because the gentleman says the committee has a responsibility, and I agree. But the committee has a responsibility to be responsible, and it is highly irresponsible. It is reckless and dangerous for the committee to start impeachment proceedings when there is nothing to impeach the President on.

We were in the majority when the President of the United States was somebody we had a lot of disagreements with. We never filed Articles of Impeachment or talked about impeaching the President because there was nothing to impeach the President on. We never did that.

We might have disagreed with them on a lot of things, but there were no committee hearings where the chairman said: This is formal impeachment proceedings, with nothing to impeach the President on.

If he does something years down the road when he gets reelected, you know, this is not the time to go and try to harass the President when there is nothing that you have found—and you have looked. There has been this witch hunt going on for years.

It didn't yield what you were hoping for it to yield. We all should have applauded when the Mueller report said that there was no collusion. But instead of closing it out, there is still—I guess he says, by the end of the year he wants to move Articles of Impeachment. So I guess that means they have drafted it up and are hoping to find something to fill in the blanks.

But that is irresponsible of that committee to be moving down a course of impeachment when there is nothing to impeach the President on, and especially, when there is so much other work that needs to be done by that committee.

We have a border that is out of control right now; thousands of people coming across every day. Good thing the President of the United States has actually worked in agreement with Mexico. The President was able to achieve that recently, where the Mexican President said that he is going to start putting thousands of troops at the Mexican southern border.

And you know what? It is starting to yield results. But we still have human trafficking coming across our border. We still have drugs coming across our border. And there has been requests made to get more funding to secure that border, to put technology in place, to put other tools in place so that our border patrol agents can do their job securing America's border. And that is the committee of jurisdiction, and they are not bringing bills out of committee to solve that.

They are filing Articles of Impeachment or hoping to move Articles of Impeachment in the next 3 months. And there is not even anything filled in, because there is nothing the President has done to be impeached upon.

This is a serious responsibility the committee has, and, yet, they are acting in such a reckless fashion such to appease the radical left base, who wants to impeach the President, even though there is nothing to impeach him on.

But everybody else in America says, Do your job and focus on the things that are in front of you and drop this daily harassment and drumbeat of impeachment and witch hunts.

□ 1245

It is time to move on and do the work of the committee instead of focusing on impeaching a President, even though there is nothing to impeach him on.

If there is something, show us what it is. But to recklessly say in an open hearing that they are going to impeach the President and move Articles of Impeachment to this House floor by the end of this year, on what?

This has to end. We have to focus on the things that need to be fixed by that committee and this Congress and drop this witch hunt.

Look, at some point, the other side is going to have to figure out which way they want to go because some people in the gentleman's radical base might want to impeach no matter what, but everybody else knows it is the wrong thing to do. Everybody else knows it is irresponsible for that committee to act that way.

I would hope that y'all would make the right decision and say that you are

going to move forward on the things that need to be addressed by the committee. If there is something that comes up, sure, they go look at it, but there is not anything. If there was, they would have filed it already. But to say they are going to file it even if there is nothing, that is dangerous, reckless, and irresponsible.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I didn't want to get into this debate, and I don't want to prolong it, but I do not want the premises articulated by the whip, Mr. Speaker, to stand unobjected to.

In my view, Mr. Speaker, the Mueller report is replete with instances of cooperation by members of the Trump team with the Russians, page after page after page. As a matter of fact, one of them was Page, of collusion.

Now, ''collusion'' is not a legal term. ''Conspiracy'' is the legal term. Mr. Mueller said we didn't look at collusion because it was not a legal premise.

In fact, Mr. Mueller made it very clear that the reason they didn't find criminal wrongdoing was because they believed, under Justice Department rules, a President cannot be indicted during the course of his term. They did not absolve him.

Whether it was obstruction of justice, using a foreign government that is, essentially, not our ally, not our friend, or meeting with Putin secretly and not allowing the American people or the Congress to know what was said, my friend's premise that there is no smoke, no fire, is wrong.

Very frankly, as someone who has served here a long time and who has seen some of the most irresponsible attacks on the President during the Obama administration—hearings, over and over and over again. A tragedy in Benghazi—seven hearings, seven hearings, all concluded nothing there, so they had an eighth hearing.

The gentleman talks about Judiciary. Eight hearings on Benghazi, four lives lost tragically, with an attempt over and over and over again to be made a political issue. The eighth found nothing there either.

When I see this wringing of hands, Mr. Speaker, I am not impressed. I have been here for a long time. I have seen irresponsible action, and the American people have seen it.

The Judiciary Committee is doing what it pledged to do when they all raised their hands to defend and support the Constitution of the United States of America.

The President would like us to think everything is fake news. The gentleman hasn't used ''fake news'' but ''the witch hunt.''

''Poor me. I am the victim of all these people,'' when, daily, the President says things that are demonstrably not true.

Mr. Speaker, the Judiciary Committee will continue to pursue its duties, as it needs to do.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, if you talk about Benghazi, there are a lot of serious questions that have not been answered yet.

Mr. HOYER. Eight hearings, all Republican-led.

Mr. SCALISE. Eight hearings, and maybe more should have been had, to investigate why those deaths happened that should not have happened.

Mr. HOYER. And all found nothing there.

Mr. SCALISE. It shouldn't have happened. It should have been stopped.

Mr. HOYER. All found nothing there, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SCALISE. It was unwarranted, what happened there. Fast and Furious, a lot of questions raised.

There were multiple times when the President took action where, ultimately, he was found to be out of compliance with the law, where courts reversed what the President did. We never moved Articles of Impeachment for that. That doesn't warrant high crimes and misdemeanors.

Surely, we investigated those things, and in most cases, it turned out we were right.

With Benghazi, those questions still haven't been answered, about why they died and shouldn't have, because everybody knew the dangers.

Mr. HOYER. Eight hearings found nothing there.

Mr. SCALISE. Found nothing there?

Mr. HOYER. All led by Republicans.

Mr. SCALISE. Found out that Americans died when it was known that it was dangerous where they were. Why weren't planes circled? You could have flown jets over there in 15 minutes to scare away the people who were attacking that Embassy and killing Americans.

We looked into it, and it raised a lot of questions.

Mr. HOYER. Eight times you looked into it.

Mr. SCALISE. Maybe it should have been more to look into why those Americans died so that it doesn't happen again. Things like that, which shouldn't have happened, we should find out what went wrong. Why did people miss telltale signs and let those people die who shouldn't have died?

Yes, those hearings were warranted, but we never filed Articles of Impeachment. We never said we were going to move to impeach so now let's go figure something out, see if we can find something, and even if we don't find something, we are still going to do it.

That is reckless. They took an oath, absolutely, like all of us, to uphold this Constitution and protect this country.

We have a border that is not secure. We have thousands of people coming over every single day, including people who are bringing drugs, trafficking humans, young kids who are being abused. We all know what is happening.

That is the committee of jurisdiction, and they are ignoring it. They haven't produced a single bill to go and solve that problem.

Are they okay with what is going on at the border? They don't think that legislation is warranted to address it, to close the asylum loopholes that everybody knows are a magnet that is bringing people over here illegally, coming through other countries that are offering them asylum to come here illegally? But we don't want to fix that problem because the committee is focused on impeachment.

We will see what they do. But the American people are watching, too, and the American people are tired of those kinds of games—every single day, focusing their energies and taxpayer dollars on attacking the President, on attacking his family, on attacking his Cabinet members and people who did business deals with him 20 years ago who are getting subpoenaed and who have nothing to do with his Presidency just because they want to harass the President because they don't like the fact that he was duly elected in 2016.

The American people did duly elect him President, and he is doing his job. He is carrying out his mission despite all that.

Shame on that committee for continuing to abuse their power by going after something whether it is there or not. Every prosecutor knows you don't try to go find something on somebody. You should follow the facts. If the facts lead you to a dead end, then you end. You don't keep looking. It is not there.

They want to keep doing it and abusing their power. But there is accountability that happens, too. That is why we have elections.

If that is what the committee wants to do, and if that is what the leadership of this House Democratic Caucus wants to do, people are watching.

I want to talk about one final thing, and that is USMCA, an opportunity for us to get something big done for this country.

I had a meeting yesterday with Ambassador Lighthizer, the U.S. Trade Representative, who I know has been meeting with Speaker PELOSI and her team. In fact, a few weeks ago, the Speaker, through her trade working group on USMCA, sent a letter to Ambassador Lighthizer, identifying some areas that they would like addressed in the USMCA trade agreement.

I understand that, last night, Ambassador Lighthizer sent a reply, including things that he has worked with the Democratic majority on, to try to address some of those issues and ultimately get this done.

I say this in the most sincere way: I really do think USMCA is something that we can do together, that we can get an agreement with our friends from the north and south. Canada and Mexico have both come to the table and agreed to make NAFTA work better for American workers, for American industries, for our dairy farmers that can't sell their products into Canada right now that will be able to have better open markets, better working conditions.

Clearly, we want to make sure there is enforcement, and I know that is being worked through, to put belt and suspenders.

At the end of the day, every day we wait means more jobs we are missing out on creating for our economy. I know that there is still the opportunity to get this done, maybe in the next few weeks.

We have a whip team that has been put in place specifically for USMCA. I know there are a lot of Democrats that have been working with Ambassador Lighthizer as well, to try to get this done.

I would ask the gentleman if he has any idea of where that process is on his side, if there is any idea of a timeline to finally bring this to the floor, pass this important agreement that would send a message not only to our friends from the north and south, Canada and Mexico, but to our friends all around the world, to Japan and other countries that want to get trade agreements with America but this is holding back because they want to see if this can get done.

Then, ultimately, let's shift our focus to China and all the countries around the world that want China to have to comply with the rules that everybody else has to comply with, to finally get these tariff fights over so we can have an even stronger economy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, we have said all along that we want to get to yes on the USMCA. Frankly, we think it is an improvement over NAFTA, which needs improving.

As the gentleman may know, the Speaker and I were here when we voted on NAFTA. We both voted for it.

There were some promises made and side agreements that the rights of workers and the environment would be protected. Unfortunately, that did not turn out to be true, so that, in adopting a change to NAFTA, we want to make sure that the promises made in the agreement are promises that can be enforced.

As the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has often said, the commitments in a trade pact aren't worth the paper they are written on if they can't be enforced.

Mr. Speaker, that has been the posture of the Speaker, myself, and of so many others, that enforcement is critical. Unfortunately, the NAFTA enforcement mechanisms have been a failure.

In 25 years, as I am sure the whip knows, the U.S. has taken only one successful enforcement action under the NAFTA dispute resolution procedure, and none in the past 20 years. Not a single enforcement has prevailed. We have been completely unable to enforce its labor provisions, not one successful enforcement action.

We want to get to yes. And, yes, I want to say that Ambassador Lighthizer is somebody who we respect and think is operating in good faith. We think he is a positive interlocutor. He is somebody who we can work with and have been working with.

On the other hand, we sent a letter 6 weeks ago, and as the gentleman pointed out, we got an answer yesterday. So, it is taking some time for our task force to get answers to questions and to determine how we can move forward to ensure that the matters included in the agreement become reality, not simply words on paper.

That is important for workers. It is important for our environment. Very frankly, it is also important in terms of trying to contain drug prices, here and around the world.

The gentleman talked about prescription drugs. That is one of the items that is still in dispute. We want to get to yes. We think this is an improvement on what exists.

Therefore, I am hopeful that we will be able to get to an agreement. We believe it will require that the agreement be opened and that enforcement be included so that, as the chamber said, it can really be enforced.

If that happens, I am hopeful that we can pass that agreement, with the agreement of our friends in labor, with our friends at the Chamber of Commerce, and in a bipartisan way on this floor. Let's hope that happens.

But we have made it very, very clear that, if it is just words on paper and not enforceable, it is not a good agreement for America or America's workers.

But I hope that we can move forward and achieve an agreement on this issue so that we can pass it.

□ 1300

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I share the gentleman from Maryland's optimism about the ability to get there, to get this done, to get to ''yes.'' And with the provisions that are already in place on enforcement, if there is a way to make them stronger, I know that that is something that Ambassador Lighthizer has been working with the gentleman's team on.

That is why, while the letter was sent 6 weeks ago, Ambassador Lighthizer started going to work right away, sitting down with folks on both sides, including Democratic leadership in the House, to address those as best as both sides could get agreement; and that is where the letter, I think, finally lays out the remedies to those issues that were brought up.

It is my hope that, as that is reviewed, we get to a place where we can find agreement and then get it passed. Mexico has already passed it. Canada is waiting on us. And I think we would send a strong signal to the world that, not only is America the best place to do business, with the strongest economy in the world, but we are also able to reach better trade deals, both for Americans and for our friends. Then there are a lot more folks in line waiting for us to be a part of those kind of deals, too.

So I look forward to the ability to keep working on that. I would love the ability to work with the gentleman as the Republican whip, the leader, laying out a floor schedule for when that comes, and we can celebrate something big for this country and the workers of America.

I thank the gentleman for his work and for this discourse, and I yield back the balance of my time.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW, AND ADJOURNMENT FROM FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2019, TO TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2019

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow, and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet on Tuesday, September 17, 2019, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

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

There was no objection.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 178. An act to condemn gross human rights violations of ethnic Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang, and calling for an end to arbitrary detention, torture, and harassment of these communities inside and outside China.

The message also announced that the Secretary of the Senate be directed to request the House to return to the Senate the bill (S. 1790) ''An Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2020 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.''.

PERMISSION TO EXTEND REMARKS

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to extend my remarks in the RECORD and to include therein extraneous material notwithstanding the fact that it exceeds two pages and is estimated by the Director of the Government Publishing Office to cost $2,433.98.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

CONGRATULATING ELKS LODGE 2839

(Mr. VAN DREW asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)