

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER
AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 860

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove my name as a cosponsor of H.R. 860, the Social Security 2100 Act.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1115

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

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

On Monday, 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.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate and 12 p.m. for legislative business.

On Thursday, the House expects to meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business. Last votes of the week will be expected no later than 3 p.m.

We will consider several bills under suspension of the rules. A complete list of suspensions will be announced by the close of business today.

In addition, Madam Speaker, the House will consider H.R. 2513, the Corporate Transparency Act. This bill is part of a package of legislation coming to the floor to crack down on money laundering and shine a light on the corrosive impact of dark money from Russia and other authoritarian governments on our democracy, a serious national security threat that must be addressed.

Lastly, the House will consider H.R. 4617, Stopping Harmful Interference in Elections for a Lasting Democracy, otherwise known as the SHIELD Act. Clearly, we believe that it is extraordinarily dangerous to be having foreign governments, particularly those who are hostile to the interests of democracy and the United States, to be participating in any financial way or any other way in our elections. This bill will prevent foreign interference in our elections and safeguard our democracy.

There also may be additional items that are possible to be brought forward, and we will notify the House and the minority as soon as we have made such decisions.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, I know we all continue to mourn the loss of our colleague, Elijah Cummings. We still see the flowers sitting in the spot where Elijah used to sit.

Yesterday, I thought we had a very appropriate remembrance of our col-

league in a special way, remembering who he was, the special person he was, the giant that he was, the leader—sometimes in a very boisterous way, sometimes in a gentle way.

But Maya, his wife, and his three children are in our prayers, and will continue to be as we remember that great loss that we experienced and will continue to remember.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding. I was going to mention Elijah at the end of our colloquy, but it was an extraordinarily sad day to hear of the loss yesterday, in the very early morning, of a colleague who was gentle, decent, honest, of high intellect, and high integrity.

The minority leader, Mr. McCARTHY, spoke beautifully, I thought, about sentiments from both sides of the aisle, about Elijah Cummings. He was respected as a man, not only of intellect, but of great civility and kindness. And, yes, he could be tough. He was tough. He was the son of sharecroppers and became a Member of the Congress of the United States.

What a wonderful American story, and what a wonderful, decent, good human being Elijah Cummings was. And he will be remembered as such.

I thank the minority leader and I thank the minority, so many Members, who have served with Elijah on the minority, and, obviously, on a committee as the minority leader, Mr. McCARTHY, pointed out, it can be pretty contentious from time to time.

But notwithstanding, Trey Gowdy and others who had served with him, served as either ranking member or chairman, spoke so highly of him. He was a very dear friend of mine for over four decades. He was the first African American speaker pro tem of the Maryland House of Delegates; president of the student government at Howard University, Phi Beta Kappa; and served with such distinction for 23 years in this House, and we will miss him. I thank the Republican whip for mentioning his passing, and how sad all of us are at that passing.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, as we all remember him, it is that style. It shows the example for all of us that you can be tough, you can fight for the things you believe in—we ought to all come here to fight for the things we believe in—and that means we are not always going to agree.

But he always treated people fairly, and the fact that even as he had some of those tough confrontations with people like Chairman Gowdy and JIM JORDAN, that those people who went toe to toe with him respected him, and mourn his loss equally as we all do, I think it says a lot about his character and that he is able to leave a strong legacy as a champion for the things he believed in. But even his adversaries that he fought with on the other side hold deep regard for the kind of person he was. Again, he was a great example for all of us to,

hopefully, try to emulate as we move forward with some of the other challenges that we are facing.

I do want to ask the gentleman about the latest efforts to try to get some kind of fair process in where we are with this impeachment inquiry. There are hearings going on behind closed doors. Many of my colleagues have tried to attend some of those hearings and have been turned away if they are not on the committees of jurisdiction. Colleagues that have tried to go and read things like the Volker testimony have been turned away, denied the ability to do that.

So there is a real concern that there is an attempt to impeach a President of the United States, remove a President who is duly elected, using a process of secrecy, behind closed doors, where one person is setting the rules, breaking with the tradition that we have always had with the only three other times in our country's history where an impeachment inquiry began in the House.

In all of those cases, they laid out rules of fairness, where people were able to ask questions on both sides. People were able to call witnesses on both sides. Even the President would be able to have an opportunity to have somebody there to also question people. That has always been the case, and, yet, it is not the case here.

Very serious questions of fairness have been raised, and I would ask the gentleman: Are we going to finally get beyond this secret, closed-door, Star Chamber process of impeachment and go to something that is ruled in fairness? I yield to the gentleman.

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

Madam Speaker, I reject wholly and fully the premise underlying the whip's representation. There is no unfairness in this process.

The Republicans are like the lawyer who does not have the facts, because if he has the facts, he pounds on the facts; or if he has the law on his side, he pounds on the law. But if he neither has facts nor the law on his side, he pounds on the table, Madam Speaker. He makes noise.

The Republicans talk about process, not the substance. And the process, quite interestingly enough, is much of what the Republicans put in the rules that we included in our rules when we adopted them.

And as the whip clearly knows, one of the strongest advocates and defenders of the President of the United States sits there in the hearing, asks questions, can review documents, and could go right back to the White House and to all of your Members and say: This is what happened.

There is no unfairness in this, and no requirement that we have a vote. The committee is doing its job of fact-finding. Frankly, the White House counsel wrote a letter filled with eight pages that clearly misconstrues the status of this process; treats it as if it were the

trial. We do not conduct the trial, Madam Speaker. The Senate conducts the trial.

And just as in our legal due process system, when that occurs, the President will have all of that due process, I am sure, extended to him by the House of Representatives. That is not what this proceeding is.

This proceeding is to decide whether there is probable cause to think that the President of the United States has committed high crimes and misdemeanors. We have not made that conclusion yet, and we may not make it if the facts do not lead us there.

As Mr. SCHIFF pointed out in his letter to all of the Members, there is a very definite reason why grand juries and this committee are doing its process with full participation by the Republican Members of the Select Committee on Intelligence; full participation.

It is because witnesses ought not to be forewarned of what somebody else has said. Why? So that they don't parrot the other witness but tell the truth as they know it to be.

And I will tell the gentleman, the other reason grand juries are in secret is to protect the innocent, so that if there is no probable cause, there will be no assertion that somebody alleged that somebody did something wrong.

But the Republicans have been pounding on process and the reason for that, Madam Speaker, is they don't even want to discuss the substance. Of course, the Acting Chief of Staff did discuss substance. It is on the front page of The Washington Post. Of course we do this.

So I will tell my friend, this process is fair. It is consistent with the rules. It is consistent with the Constitution of the United States. It is consistent with the laws of this country. It is about one of the most serious matters we can deal with, and we don't want to make it a circus.

Yes, the committee is doing its work in camera, so to speak, adducing the facts. And your Members, and, particularly, one of the President's strongest supporters, defenders, and collaborators is sitting in the room every time the hearing occurs—unless he absences himself—and the Members of that committee, which you have appointed—not you personally, but your conference has appointed—are sitting in the room, equal time asking questions.

□ 1130

This hearing is fair, judicious, and thoughtful. And the attempt to besmirch the chairman of the committee is shameful. He is a fair and experienced Member of this body who has conducted himself as he should.

It is our constitutional responsibility, Madam Speaker, to see the facts behind conduct that may rise to the level of a high crime and misdemeanor. We don't know that to be the case, but if it is, we will meet our duty to the Constitution, to the laws of this Nation, and to the American public.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, with all due respect, this process is rotten to the core. The gentleman can talk about process, and he can talk about facts. The facts point out that this process is shrouded in secrecy.

Madam Speaker, you literally have a chairman who was running around for 2 years during the whole Mueller investigation saying that he had "more than circumstantial evidence" that there was collusion between the President and Russia. And then the Mueller Report comes out, and there were no charges. There was no collusion. In fact, the chairman never showed his secret evidence. If he had evidence "more than circumstantial"—his quotes—then he should have shown it to the American people. But he didn't because there was no evidence.

Those were the facts. If the facts were there, Madam Speaker, you know he would have shown that evidence. It didn't exist.

Instead of moving on and taking care of the work of the people of this country, it is another witch hunt. It is another fishing expedition in secret.

The gentleman talks about fairness, why is it that voting Members of Congress are being denied access to the room?

The press doesn't have access to these hearings that the gentleman calls fair. He calls them fair. There was never even a vote of this House to start an impeachment inquiry. It was a decree from the Speaker in The Washington Post in September: "Therefore, today, I am announcing"—the Speaker of the House—"I am announcing the House of Representatives is moving forward with an official impeachment inquiry."

That is a decree by the Speaker of the House. That has never happened before. The other three times when there was an impeachment inquiry, it was started with a vote of the full House. Everybody was accountable—no Star Chamber, no one or two people in this country who think they can run the entire process and deny the people the right of a duly elected President to serve because they just don't agree with the results of the 2016 election.

They never showed high crimes and misdemeanors. The majority has never shown high crimes and misdemeanors. They are just looking around for something.

The majority calls witnesses. They talk about fairness and who is in the room. Our side cannot call witnesses. Do you think that is fair?

Our side, the President's own counsel—

Mr. HOYER. That is your rule.

Mr. SCALISE. The gentleman will have an opportunity—

Mr. HOYER. That is your rule.

Mr. SCALISE. The gentleman made a lot—

Mr. HOYER. That is your rule, Mr. SCALISE.

Mr. SCALISE. This is your rule. You are in charge of the House.

Mr. HOYER. That is your rule in the Republican rule that we adopted.

Mr. SCALISE. This is your rule. You are in charge of the House.

Mr. HOYER. That is your rule in the Republican rule that we adopted.

Mr. SCALISE. You are the one who made the official decree.

This is my time. I will yield time to the gentleman in a moment.

If he wants to talk about fairness, let's lay out the facts because these are the facts: Our side cannot call witnesses. The majority could change that rule today.

I would ask the gentleman: Would you be willing to change the rule to let our side call witnesses and to let the President's counsel be able to question witnesses who are, in secret, making charges against him to try to literally undo the results of a duly elected President? Would the gentleman be willing to change the rules to do that?

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Fine. We are going under your rules.

Mr. SCALISE. These are your rules. You are the majority party.

Mr. HOYER. When we were in the minority, we were not allowed to do what you are requesting to do. We were not allowed to do it—

Mr. SCALISE. We never tried to impeach a President—

Mr. HOYER.—in any of the hearings.

Mr. SCALISE.—with all due respect.

Mr. HOYER. These are your rules, Mr. SCALISE.

Mr. SCALISE. And in all three cases where there was an impeachment—

Mr. HOYER. Ask your counsel.

Mr. SCALISE.—the rules allow for both sides to have fairness.

Mr. HOYER. Ask your counsel if those are your rules.

Mr. SCALISE. You think fairness is you being able to control everything and not letting the other side—

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, apparently, he does not want to answer—

Mr. SCALISE.—participate.

Madam Speaker, I reclaim the time.

Mr. HOYER.—about it being his rule.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. GARCIA of Texas). Gentlemen, gentlemen, please. Let's have some order.

Mr. SCALISE. I appreciate it, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. You can proceed.

Mr. SCALISE. So let's look at the process. Let's look at the facts.

Yes, if you think it is fair that you can control everything and deny the ability for Members of Congress to go in and see what is happening behind closed doors in that room, if you think it is fair to deny the ability for both sides to call witnesses—hey, you get to call your witnesses and you think that is fair, and you don't want anything to be disclosed.

You talk about innocence. Everybody is innocent until proven guilty. You think the President should have to go prove his innocence time and time

again, with anonymous sources in many cases citing things that are inaccurate, that have been disproven. But you can lay false claims out, and the chairman can lay false claims out, and then the President has to go prove his innocence.

Time and time again, we see that even with these selective leaks that are coming out of your committee—which shouldn't happen—many of those are disproven too, but the damage is done.

Just like when the chairman opened up the committee hearing with a parody, stating things that were false that were not part of the phone call between President Trump and President Zelensky, giving his own version of it that was false while the public was watching on TV thinking that was the transcript, that is disingenuous. That is not a fair process, but that is what happened.

Just today and yesterday and every day, we have had of members of our party—I don't know if any members of your party have tried—but members of our party who wanted to try to go down there and read the Volker testimony or sit in the hearings were turned away because the process is going on in secret.

This is not fairness. This is not how it has always been done. If you really think it is unfair, and you think the rules should be changed, you do get the control over that. I will write the rule with you, and we will vote for it together. We could pass that rule today.

In fact, I filed a rule change with Ranking Member COLE of the Rules Committee to allow Members access to these hearings.

Madam Speaker, I would ask the gentleman: Would you be willing to schedule this rule for the floor so we could have more fairness in this process?

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Does the gentleman not trust Mr. NUNES?

Apparently, there is no answer to that question.

Mr. NUNES is the ranking Republican and very close friend, associate, and defender of the President of the United States. He is there to hear every word. My presumption is he also can tell every word to his colleagues.

Mr. SCALISE. Well, let me ask the gentleman: Would he allow—

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker—

Mr. SCALISE.—Mr. NUNES to call witnesses?

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, he yielded to me. Is he reclaiming his time and shutting me up?

Mr. SCALISE. Well, you asked a question. Could I answer the question?

Mr. HOYER. You didn't answer it. But if you want to answer—

Mr. SCALISE. I am trying to answer it.

Mr. HOYER. Do you trust Mr. NUNES?

Mr. SCALISE. I would trust Mr. NUNES to have equal access to call in witnesses, just like Chairman SCHIFF does, to subpoena people. Chairman SCHIFF can do that, and Mr. NUNES cannot.

Why is Mr. NUNES denied those same rights that the chairman has?

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. He hasn't answered my question yet, but I will assert again—

Mr. SCALISE. I would trust him to run that same fair process.

Mr. HOYER. I assert, again, to anyone who is listening, we are operating—

Mr. SCALISE. But he is denied that.

Mr. HOYER.—with respect to that under the rules that the Republicans adopted in their rules package and applied to our side when we were in the minority, Madam Speaker.

The same rules that they imposed upon us they are now complaining about because they don't think they were fair. Apparently, they thought they were fair when they were applied to the Democratic minority. But, apparently, now those same rules—their rules they adopted and voted for—are not fair because they are in the minority.

Very frankly, what is good for the goose is good for the gander. What is fair to the goose is fair to the gander.

They are your rules, Mr. SCALISE. You ask your counsel. We adopted your rules on the issuing of subpoenas—your rules.

Mr. SCALISE. With all due respect, the goose is being cooked behind closed doors because you started an impeachment inquiry by decree. You could change the rules today.

If this is an impeachment inquiry, if it is—and I would ask the question: Are we in an impeachment inquiry right now?

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. We are in an exercise of our constitutional responsibility—

Mr. SCALISE. Of an impeachment? Is it? Yes or no? Is it an impeachment inquiry?

Mr. HOYER. Is the gentleman going to let me answer?

Mr. SCALISE. I would ask him. It is a yes or no question, but I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. The answer is that we are involved in exercising our constitutional responsibility to oversee, to make sure that the laws of this Nation and the Constitution of this Nation are honored in practice and in spirit but particularly in practice.

Let me ask the gentleman a question. Do you think it is okay to ask foreign leaders to interfere in our elections?

Mr. SCALISE. Is the gentleman yielding?

Mr. HOYER. Certainly. It is your time, you yielded to me, and I am asking a question.

Mr. SCALISE. So as the so-called whistleblower—

Mr. HOYER. You want to talk about process. That is substance.

Mr. SCALISE. As the so-called whistleblower complaint started with leaks

to the press, where they said there were quid pro quos in the phone call with Zelensky, that is where this all started—

Mr. HOYER. Do you want me to read you the transcript?

Mr. SCALISE. So a phone call, this was before the transcript was released, there were all of these insinuations.

And this is a pattern, by the way, we have seen even going back to the Mueller investigation. And again, I cited the chairman running around, saying he had more than circumstantial evidence—

Mr. HOYER. Who appointed Mr. Mueller?

Mr. SCALISE.—of collusion, and there was no collusion.

So now we move on to this claim of quid pro quo. Well, first of all, you can name all the whistleblowers you want—you won't. You won't even allow the whistleblower to be interviewed, someone who is trying to take down—someone who was deemed to have a political bias is trying to take down a President of the United States in secret—

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCALISE.—behind closed doors with innuendos.

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCALISE. Absolutely. I would absolutely yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. When he is talking about the whistleblower, is that the person that the President of the United States said ought to be treated as if he had done treason?

And we know what we do to those who commit treason.

Is that the whistleblower you want outed? Is that the whistleblower you want to expose to that kind of danger? Is that what you are talking about?

Mr. SCALISE. First of all—

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I would ask the whip—

Mr. SCALISE. If you would yield, if you are talking about the whistleblower, we are talking about a whistleblower, again, who is deemed to have a political bias who got all of their information secondhand.

And oh, by the way, the standard for being a whistleblower used to be first-hand information and, secretly, days before the whistleblower complaint was filed, after going to Chairman SCHIFF's staff and working with partisans to develop the whistleblower complaint, they changed the rules for even designating what is a whistleblower so it could allow secondhand information.

Who changed that rule? Boy, we would sure be curious to find out. But you don't want us to find all that out because you are holding all of this in secret.

Shouldn't we know what is really going on and what is behind this so-called whistleblower complaint that has been debunked?

So many of those claims were debunked. There was no quid pro quo. In

fact, the two people who were on the phone call, the ones who are really in question here, both said there was nothing wrong, both of them.

In fact, Zelensky said there was no pressure. He wasn't even aware that any funds were being held up. He praised the President for selling Javelin missiles to Ukraine, which, by the way, Barack Obama would not sell when he was President of the United States. He withheld the Javelin missiles that Ukraine was asking for to defend themselves against Russia.

Again, we talk about Russia. Who stood up to Russia? President Trump stood up to Russia by allowing Ukraine to buy the Javelin missiles to bust the tanks. Barack Obama wouldn't sell those. I don't know why he wouldn't allow Ukraine to stand up to Russia. I don't know why Barack Obama allowed Russia to interfere with our elections and didn't do more to stop it.

But we should be getting to the bottom of that, yet we are not because it is all a focus of secrecy, drip-drip, selective leaks to try to give a false narrative. Our Members can't go talk to our other colleagues about some of the things that happened in these hearings. It is all secret.

We want it to be opened up. In fact, that is why I filed a rule change.

Again, I would ask the gentleman: Would he support a rule change that would allow all Members to participate and be involved in at least sitting in on these hearings to see what is really going on if you are going to ask people to impeach the President of the United States?

Again, it has always been done with a vote of the House. Now it is being done by a decree from the Speaker. And you won't answer the question of whether or not, yes or no, it is an impeachment inquiry.

The Speaker said it is an impeachment inquiry, but we have never voted on it. Why don't we ever vote like we did all other times to set real rules of fairness?

They always set rules of fairness where both sides got to participate. Real due process, which is part of our Constitutional duty, is being denied in secret. That is what is happening in that room right now.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, there is no such rule. None.

Mr. SCALISE. There is.

Mr. HOYER. But Mr. SCALISE believes, Madam Speaker, the more he repeats it, somebody will believe it.

Mr. SCALISE. Well, why are Members being denied entrance to the room?

Mr. HOYER. Have you yielded to me?

Mr. SCALISE. They are being turned away today.

Mr. HOYER. Have you yielded to me?

Mr. SCALISE. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. There is no such rule. There are no requirements for any

committee to undertake any investigation that you have to have a rule passed by this House.

And the gentleman apparently thinks that, by having an investigation and an inquiry, somehow that is an impeachment; it is not. He is absolutely right.

To impeach would have to have a vote of this House. Clearly, that is correct. That is consistent with the Constitution and the laws of this country. There is nothing that says—other than the Republicans who repeat it ad nauseam because they are hopeful that some people will believe what they say, that somehow it is unfair that Democrats and Republicans are sitting together as the constituted Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence looking at this matter.

Everybody has a right to ask a question in that room. All Members have a right to review the materials.

What he doesn't like is the rule that they put in place, Madam Speaker, about who can call witnesses.

□ 1145

They said the minority could not call witnesses unless the chairman and the committee approved of it. That is their rule, not our rule. We adopted our rule. We kept that rule in.

I asked the gentleman, Madam Speaker, a question. Does he believe it is right for a President of the United States to seek foreign interference in our elections? He has not answered that question.

Here is the—it is not a transcript. It is a report of the conversation, which came from the White House. I would hope we could count on its accuracy.

President: "I would like you to do us a favor, though."

What do you think "though" means?

Yes, I know you want something, but I would like to you do a favor, "though."

Mulvaney: Aid withheld to press Ukraine.

Now, he doesn't say what it was for. I get that. But you don't think President Zelensky had any doubt: I would like you to do a favor.

Now, the whip, Madam Speaker, has not answered my question whether he thinks it is appropriate for a President to ask a foreign leader for help in the elections, whether it was the 2016 or the 2020 elections. I happen to believe it was the 2020 elections.

He talks about Hunter Biden; he talks about Joe Biden all the time. So it would not be an unreasonable conclusion that that is what he was talking about.

Let me ask you another question.

Mr. SCALISE. Would the gentleman yield on that specific accusation he just threw out?

Mr. HOYER. Before I do that, let me say, collusion, by the way, my friend, is not a crime. What, however, Mr. Mueller did find is that there was reason to believe that there was obstruction of justice, which is a crime. He said, however, that, under Justice De-

partment's rulings, he could not indict the sitting President, so he referred it to us.

Now, he is not a special prosecutor, as Mr. SCHIFF pointed out. The special prosecutors who precluded the two most recent impeachment proceedings, by the way, did their work in secret. They did their work as a grand jury does their work.

And, by the way, I don't think the gentleman is a lawyer, but in the grand jury, people under investigation do not have the right either to question, present evidence, or have counsel present in a grand jury. That is the prosecutors trying to find out whether there is probable cause that a crime has been committed by A, B, or C. And at that point in time, if the grand jury agrees, an indictment is laid down, and then all the due process rights to which Mr. Cipollone talked about in his letter—he did go to law school, and I don't know how he wrote that letter. It has been panned by almost every legal scholar that has reviewed it.

But I will tell my friend, do you believe it is appropriate to need a favor—clearly about the elections, whatever election. Do you believe it is appropriate for us to ask a foreign leader to involve themselves in our elections?

Mr. SCALISE. I thank the gentleman for yielding because there were many things that were thrown out there that need to be addressed.

First of all, the Department of Justice disagreed with Mueller's assessment that he didn't have the ability to bring charges. He had full authority to bring any charges, and he brought zero charges.

Mueller had full authority to bring charges and brought zero because he found nothing, and Justice even said he didn't have—

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCALISE. I am going to yield in a moment after I go through the different claims the gentleman made.

It is real interesting that the majority leader read selectively from that conversation between President Trump and Zelensky on: Will you do me a favor?

So let me read you the full sentence, because you are trying to take one context and shift it somewhere else, which has been done over and over by Chairman SCHIFF and others.

So let's start. This is President Trump:

I would like you to find out what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine. They say CrowdStrike.

That is the sentence where he said: I would like you to do us a favor.

Not "me," "us."

Please read the transcript. That is what he said.

And when he said, "I would like you to do 'us' a favor, though, because our country has been through a lot and Ukraine knows a lot about it," the corruption was going on in Ukraine. The interference from Russia, much of it

was emanating from Ukraine in 2016. We know that. Don't deny it. Don't try to hide that.

"I would like you to find out what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine. They say CrowdStrike."

He is not talking about Biden. He is not talking about some future election. He is talking about the company that was looking into the corruption and the interference by Russia in the 2016 election. We still haven't gotten to the bottom of that. This is part of it. This absolutely went through Ukraine.

And, by the way, in the NDAA, a law that is on the books today that the gentleman voted for and I voted for, the law requires that, when the United States of America is giving money to a foreign country, they have to make sure that they are looking into whether or not there is corruption. And so he is absolutely looking into the corruption, because we are sending hundreds of millions of dollars over there.

And before they sent the hundreds of millions, the law—not his personal preference, the law—says he has to look to make sure there is no corruption. That is in the NDAA law that we passed last year. That is current law.

And so the President is complying with the law asking him "do us a favor"—us, not him. Please make that note accurately. And then he asks about CrowdStrike. Not Biden, CrowdStrike.

We all know what CrowdStrike was involved in. They were involved in looking into some of the illegal activity that Russia was participating in to try to interfere with the 2016 election.

We still haven't gotten the answer to that. I wish your committee would be spending more time on that so that we can stop it from happening again.

And so that is what he was talking about. That is the context. It is not accurate, it is not fair to try to read it out of context and then go attribute it to something else, because many have done that.

"I would like you to do us a favor."

And then he says, all of this stuff that was happening in Ukraine, "they say CrowdStrike." That is what he asked about.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I know he is very interested in reading the whole thing, so let me read him some more of the report we got from the White House.

The other thing: "There's a lot of talk about Biden's son, that Biden stopped the prosecution and a lot of people want to find out about that." So: "Biden went around bragging that he stopped the prosecution, so if you can look into it"—that doesn't sound to me like the 2016 election—"if you can look into it, it sounds horrible to me."

What do you mean he doesn't mention Biden? I will give you a copy of this, if you would like, if you want to

read the whole—I have read the whole thing.

What do you think Giuliani was talking about? 2016? No.

Two of his compatriots, of course, million-dollar bail; the Ambassador, fired. Why? Because she wouldn't cooperate with making a foreign leader complicit in the elections of the United States of America. She had the courage to come testify, as did the security adviser for Russia from the White House in this administration.

Now, frankly, Madam Speaker, I don't think this is the time to argue the case. The time continues to be finding out the facts, finding out the facts. And those facts, every day, are more instructive, whether it is Mr. Giuliani, the President's lawyer, who was substituted, Madam Speaker, for the State Department—a private State department.

The gentleman still hasn't answered my question: Is it appropriate? I want a favor. And oh, by the way, the Bidens, you know, that Hunter Biden and Joe Biden, you really ought to look at them.

Everybody who has looked at this has said, including the present prosecutor—or the recently present. I don't think he still is the prosecutor, but the subsequent prosecutor said: We looked at this. Nothing there. Nothing there.

That wasn't acceptable, of course, to the President of the United States, so he kept beating on it. And he had \$391 million needed by our Ukrainian friends to defend themselves against the Russians, otherwise known as Putin.

Maybe Putin didn't want that money to go to Russia, to go to Ukraine, Madam Speaker.

We just did a resolution for which Mr. SCALISE voted, and that resolution essentially said that the actions taken the other day by the President in a phone call with the authoritarian leader of Ukraine helped Russia, helped Iran, helped Syria—

Mr. SCALISE. With all due respect, the resolution does not say that.

Mr. HOYER.—and hurt our allies in the fight against ISIS, and has now reached an agreement that the President claimed some victory on where the Turks got everything they wanted and our allies are going to be pushed out.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, I would hope the gentleman is not trying to conflate Ukraine with Turkey and Syria and the Kurds.

Mr. HOYER. No, sir.

Mr. SCALISE. Because you just made that assertion, and that is not—

Mr. HOYER. No, I did not make that assertion.

Mr. SCALISE. The gentleman did.

Mr. HOYER. What I said was that we are going to obviously have, and the committee is having, a hearing on that very matter without a vote of this committee, because it is their responsibility. And your minority member, Mr. McCaul, is for that resolution that is

going to come out on the Turkish sanctions.

My point to you is there was no vote of this body that they should do that. They are doing their responsibility as the Select Committee on Intelligence, as the Committee on the Judiciary, as the Committee on Foreign Affairs, as the Committee on Oversight and Reform. They are doing their duty.

When they reach a conclusion, they will come and report to us. And they will report, perhaps, no finding, or maybe they will report they have findings and, as a result, this body will vote.

But the gentleman has still not answered my basic question: Do you think it is correct for a President of the United States—clearly, if you read this—you wanted to read the whole thing; you read the whole thing. Clearly, almost everybody who has read it—almost everybody who has read it, even some of Mr. Trump's friends whom he is now mad at have read it and said: Look, this was not proper.

I am asking, Madam Speaker, whether the whip thinks it is proper to ask a foreign leader to interfere in our elections.

Mr. SCALISE. Well, first of all, there were no foreign leaders being asked to interfere with elections. Russia was trying to interfere with our elections when Barack Obama was President.

President Trump is in this phone call and in other actions trying to get to the bottom of how the Russians interfered to make sure it doesn't happen again. And he also has legal authority in the NDAA to focus on decreasing corruption as it involves taxpayer money, and that was what they were discussing on that phone call as well.

But getting back to the issue of the hearings, because the gentleman keeps talking about the hearings and what this committee might produce, as if they are having hearings on a bill to lower drug prices—which, by the way, we could be focusing on lowering drug prices. There was a unanimous bill that came out of committee to lower drug prices.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, we did that yesterday, as you know.

Mr. SCALISE. But the gentleman won't bring that bill to the floor that would pass and be signed into law today, and families across America would be paying lower prices for drug costs. But we don't get that opportunity because they are focused on an impeachment inquiry.

And, again, it was the Speaker's own words. She said this is an impeachment inquiry.

And so you are trying to play it both ways. You are trying to say, oh, it is just the committee doing a normal hearing.

It is not a normal hearing. Every time there has been an impeachment inquiry, there were rules laid out by the House through a vote of all Members of the House—all three times. Even going back to Andrew Johnson,

they voted in the House; for Clinton, they voted in the House; for Nixon, they voted in the House, and both sides had fairness, both sides could call witnesses. That is not the case today. Only Chairman SCHIFF gets to call witnesses.

Oh, gee-whiz, other people can question Schiff's witnesses, but why can't everybody question DEVIN NUNES' witnesses or JIM JORDAN's witnesses? Because they are not allowed to come forward under your rules.

And, again, we have a rule, 103(a)(2).

You cannot say that Members are not being denied entrance. The rules of the House, which you are in the majority, you can change, we can change. But every time there has been an impeachment inquiry, all three times, this House established those rules.

And so you want to deem an impeachment inquiry by the Speaker's decree, not a vote of the House. Well, if you are going to do it, then do it the fair way that it has always been done, where both sides can call witnesses, both sides can issue subpoenas, the White House can actually have counsel to ask questions to witnesses.

Some who have made statements that have been deemed inaccurate, you won't allow the people who were there who can deem it inaccurate to come testify because you don't want both sides of the story. You want to be able to present some one-sided report and say: Here, this shows us what we wanted.

Because if a prosecutor wants to go and find somebody guilty, they can meander around and look, but that is not the way it is supposed to work. It is supposed to work where the prosecutor sees something wrong, then they go out and, in a fair process, find it.

□ 1200

That is the Justice Department, by the way, the judicial branch, that does it. ADAM SCHIFF is not a prosecutor in this case. He might have been a prosecutor in his previous life, but he is a chairman of a committee in Congress now. He is not a prosecutor, but he is acting like one, and he is doing it in secret, without fair rules.

I can't go into that hearing, and you can't go into that hearing. Rank-and-file Members can't go into that hearing. They are being denied, today, the ability to do it.

And you could change that rule. If it is truly an impeachment inquiry—and, again, you won't answer the question of yes or no, but the Speaker said it is. If it is, then treat it like every other impeachment inquiry where there is fair due process on both sides, not just your side.

You might like the fact that only you can call witnesses, but you know that is not fair. You know that is not a fair process. And it is not how it has been done in all other cases.

Mr. HOYER. It is your rule.

Mr. SCALISE. So I would just ask the gentleman, would he be willing to

treat this impeachment inquiry, as the Speaker designated it, like all of the other impeachment inquiries in the history of this Congress that have been held, in a fair process?

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, Mr. SCALISE ought to know this is not like any other one.

I am not sure about Johnson. There was a special prosecutor in the Nixon case. Nixon fired the first one, Mr. Cox, you will recall. Mr. Jaworski succeeded him.

There was a special prosecutor in the Clinton case. All of them did—not exactly, because all the Republicans are in the room that are on the committee, members of the committee.

It is a Select Committee on Intelligence. The Intelligence Committee operates that way, consistent with their rules and with your rule. You continue to say we ought to change the rule. It is your rule that we adopted in our own rules. You didn't like it. You liked it when it was applied to us, but you don't like it when it is applied to you.

Mr. SCALISE. We never had an impeachment inquiry. We are talking about an impeachment inquiry, which has been done before—there is precedent—three times, and it has always been done the same way.

You are now having an impeachment inquiry, but you are treating it as if it is a secret, closed-door hearing, which it is not.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, the whip continues to ignore the fact that there were very different circumstances. There were two special prosecutors with respect to Nixon and one special prosecutor with respect to Mr. Clinton. That was a radically different position than we find ourselves in today.

Mueller, by the way, was appointed by the Deputy Attorney General of the United States, a Republican appointed by the President of the United States, Mr. Trump—not our guy. He appointed him.

Now, he dismisses that the special—he is not a special prosecutor, but I forget exactly what his title was. In any event, he wasn't a special prosecutor, but he did, in fact, find that there was reason to believe that there was obstruction of justice.

Mr. SCALISE. He filed no charges. He had authority. He filed no charges. He found nothing that rose to the level of filing charges that he had the full authority to do.

Mr. HOYER. That is inaccurate, Madam Speaker. That is inaccurate.

Mr. SCALISE. That is accurate. Did he file a single charge? Please name it, because I haven't seen the charge because it doesn't exist.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Why didn't he file a charge? And if you read the report, as I am sure you did—

Mr. SCALISE. So you are acknowledging he didn't.

Mr. HOYER. He said: I didn't file a charge because I cannot file a charge against the President of the United States under Justice Department rules.

Mr. SCALISE. And the Department of Justice disagreed with that, but he had the authority.

Mr. HOYER. He was an employee and working for the Justice Department. He was under the aegis of the Deputy Attorney General of the United States. He was not an independent actor, a special prosecutor. He was an employee of the Justice Department.

And the rules that Mueller followed under the Justice Department are that you cannot indict a President. He said, however, the Congress can take action. He said that. He said we were the proper authority to take action in a case like this.

We are doing that.

He puts a lot of emphasis on "inquiry." Investigation, inquiry, hearing—it is a fact-finding process in the pursuit of our constitutional duties to find out whether high crimes and misdemeanors have been committed by the President of the United States.

It is a hearing. It is an investigation. Call it an inquiry. The Speaker said "inquiry." I adopt that language—investigation, hearing, whatever the language is.

Mr. SCALISE. But an impeachment inquiry is different.

Mr. HOYER. But the substance of these charges—and I asked him about one. He hasn't answered the question of whether he thinks it is appropriate to ask a foreign leader for a favor. He says, no, he didn't ask for a favor.

Mr. SCALISE. He asked for a favor to look into CrowdStrike. Again, read the sentence.

Mr. HOYER. Why did he mention the Bidens?

Mr. SCALISE. A lot of people are asking about the Bidens, by the way.

Mr. HOYER. That is reaching.

Mr. SCALISE. I don't think that is anything new.

Mr. HOYER. Because that was the subject of the discussion, Madam Speaker.

Mr. SCALISE. CrowdStrike was the subject of the favor for us, for our country, to find out how Russia interfered with the elections.

By the way, all nine Republicans of the House Intelligence Committee sent a letter to Chairman SCHIFF accusing him of "withholding the existence of documents from the minority."

So, you want to talk about fairness. Maybe it is fair for you to withhold information from the minority members of a committee during an impeachment inquiry—withholding information, hiding it, keeping it in secret, turning away other Members of Congress from even walking into the room. And you are going to defend that?

We would join with you today to establish rules of fairness. You don't have to make them up. You don't have

to reinvent the wheel because, in all other three impeachment inquiries, they did it the same way where both sides had true fairness.

If you think fairness—just because you have the might doesn't make it right. You have the majority, so you can call your witnesses and shut everybody else out and “withholding the existence of documents from the minority;” that is not the way to conduct an impeachment inquiry. And those are your rules.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, we adopted the rules adopted by the Republican majority in the last Congress dealing with this subject.

Mr. SCALISE. With all due respect, we never adopted impeachment inquiry rules. We never did.

Mr. HOYER. Of course not. You are talking about subpoenas and right to documents.

Mr. SCALISE. The last time it was done was during Bill Clinton's time in office. That was the last time it was done.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, he is talking about subpoenas; he is talking about the right to see documents.

Mr. SCALISE. I am talking about fairness, both sides having equal access to call witnesses, to counter things that are said that are inaccurate, which are, right now, not being allowed to happen.

Again, it is in secret. Nobody can see. You can make claims or statements about fairness. The minority members of the committee have just said it is not fair.

So, you can make it fair. You can bring a rule up that we would support that would actually allow both sides to have the same access to information and witnesses. You could do that right now. And I would ask the gentleman, would he be willing to do that?

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. I am willing to follow the rules that you imposed upon us.

Mr. SCALISE. On impeachment inquiries?

Mr. HOYER. We didn't have an impeachment inquiry.

Mr. SCALISE. This is an impeachment inquiry. You just admitted it is.

Mr. HOYER. No, the rules of the committee in terms of subpoenas and witnesses. We are following that rule. He complains about it.

Madam Speaker, he hasn't answered the substantive question. They don't have an answer to the substantive question.

Clearly, the testimony that was given yesterday by the Acting Chief of Staff clearly indicated putting leverage on Ukraine to get something we want, and, clearly, the President mentions the election of 2020.

Mr. SCALISE. And the Chief of Staff talked about corruption, which is the law, by the way. The law says we have to root out corruption.

Mr. HOYER. Are you reclaiming your time?

Mr. SCALISE. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. The gentleman mentioned the Justice Department. Mr. Barr is essentially Mr. Trump's lawyer. Mr. Trump mentioned him in the transcript, too—it is not a transcript; it is a report of the call—and said: Talk to Barr, and he'll come over there with you and talk about this corruption, i.e., Hunter Biden and Joe Biden, not CrowdStrike.

Mr. SCALISE. They did.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, the Justice Department refused to investigate this case, notwithstanding the waterfall of facts and information that raise questions.

We haven't resolved the answers to those questions, but we are investigating them because it is our constitutional responsibility.

And I would say to my friend: We could go on for the next 5 hours talking about this. We would not agree. You would continue to talk about process. My perspective is we are pounding on the table because the facts don't want to be discussed.

The only reason I brought up Turkey is because, by a vote of 354–60, we said the actions of the President of the United States were inappropriate and dangerous and helped our enemies, not our allies. That is what we said in that resolution, and, very frankly, two-thirds of the Republicans voted for that because they were concerned about our national security interests.

We are concerned about our national security interests when a President of the United States is talking to a foreign leader, talking about elections, past, present, or future—inappropriate, in our opinion, and, we think, inappropriate in the minds of the American people. But we will see, and we will have a vote on that at some point in time.

But, first, we are going to find out what the facts are, and we have witnesses coming forward to give us those facts, with every Republican member of the committee able to be there, able to question witnesses, with equal time because we believe that is fair.

And, very frankly, he says: Well, they don't have a right to call witnesses. They do have the right to suggest calling a witness, and the committee can vote on it, under the Republican rules that we adopted.

So, Madam Speaker, I would hope that perhaps we could go on, perhaps, to something else because we are not going to reach agreement on this.

We are going to continue to have what we believe are fair, proper, consistent with the rules, consistent with the Constitution of the United States, consistent with the laws of the United States of America, to find out whether this President has committed high crimes and misdemeanors.

And then, when we conclude an answer to that question, every Member of

this House will have availability of all the information. And, very frankly, Mr. SCHIFF says in his letter to all of us, that once the witnesses have been concluded that we can see that. What he doesn't want is to have the witnesses reading one another's testimony and parrotting it. That is a fair thing, to make sure that we don't have one witness just simply adopting the testimony of another witness. We want the truth, not parrotting of other information.

So, I would hope we can move on. I am prepared to continue to speak about this, but I don't think we are going to reach any conclusion beyond what we have already stated on both sides.

Mr. SCALISE. Well, if both sides wanted the truth, they would let all witnesses be able to come forward. You shouldn't be so insecure in your claim that you won't even let somebody come and give an alternative view of some of the secondhand and, in many cases, thirdhand information, by people who have a political bias.

Madam Speaker, the gentleman hasn't answered the fundamental question of the precedent that you are trashing and rolling over and running backward over is that there have been three—only three in the history of our country—impeachment inquiries.

All of them started with a full vote of the House, and all of them had rules of fairness where both sides could participate.

That is not the case here. That is not fairness. It is surely not how it has been done all the other times. Maybe you think the other three times it was done wrong and you have got a better way, but the public doesn't buy it. That is not fair when you only let one side tell their version.

Mr. HOYER. The polls reflect that the public believes we ought to be doing what we are doing.

Mr. SCALISE. The polls reflect that there is going to be an election next year, and they want to decide the next President. They don't want the Speaker and Chairman SCHIFF to be deciding, behind closed doors, who the next President will be. That is not how we should be conducting business.

We should be moving on to other issues, like those bills that would lower drug prices, like bills that will address so many other problems that families are facing, where there is actual work, bipartisan work, that is being done by relevant committees. And they are moving bills out, and none of them are moving through this House in a bipartisan way that could become law.

So, we sit here, just days away from a potential government shutdown, and what is the focus? The focus is on a one-sided, closed-door impeachment inquiry instead of those issues.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, we have moved over 250 bills to the Senate. A number of those are very important bills in the sense that they affect a large number of people.

We passed making permanent the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and 133 Republicans voted for that bill. It sits, languishing, in the United States Senate, led by a Republican leader.

We passed that anti-hate resolution, and 173 Republicans voted for that.

We passed comprehensive background checks, and only 2 Republicans voted for that. And 90 percent of America—90 percent of America—supports that bill. It sits, languishing, in the United States Senate, unattended.

We have passed 96 percent of the funding of government prior to June 30—96 percent. It hasn't been done before. It sits.

Not a single bill has passed the Republican-led United States Senate—not a single appropriation bill.

We passed a number of bills to make sure that the ACA was stable and pre-existing conditions—Republicans didn't vote for that. Well, actually, eight did. It sits, languishing, in the United States Senate.

□ 1215

We passed a bill on climate action, what the Joint Chiefs of Staff say is one of the major challenges to our security. Three Republicans voted for that. It sits languishing in the United States Senate.

We passed disaster relief. That did pass.

We passed a lot of health legislation and prescription drug legislation. We said that prescription drug companies can't pay generics not to bring their product to the market. It is called “pay to delay.” We passed that. It sits languishing in the United States Senate.

Now, it either sits languishing in the United States Senate because MITCH MCCONNELL is against all of those or it sits languishing so the Republicans can say: You haven't done anything. All you are doing is impeachment.

That is baloney.

Madam Speaker, we had a markup yesterday on a major bill that is going to save \$345 billion, according to CBO, and bring prescription drug costs down for every American. It was marked up yesterday. We are going to bring it to the floor before we leave here this work period, and we are going to pass it.

I don't predict how many Republicans are going to vote for it, but I predict this: It will sit languishing in the United States Senate.

We passed the Equality Act so that every American would be treated consistent with our declaration that all are created equal, not just some. It sits languishing in the United States Senate.

So don't say we haven't done anything. Don't say impeachment is taking all of our time. It is not. We have one committee right now—other committees also—one committee now that is giving attention, as it should. But the Energy and Commerce Committee, the Ways and Means Committee, the

Education and Labor Committee, and so many other committees are dealing with substantive issues to make sure the lives of our people are better for the people.

I could read another 30 bills like that languishing in the Republican-led United States Senate.

We are doing our work. The government was shut down when we took over, the first time in history the government was shut down when a new Congress was sworn in—the first time. We spent 30 days just opening up the people's government.

We passed appropriations bills. But not one has passed the United States Senate, led by the Republican leadership in the United States Senate. So sad.

We ought to be doing our business. We are doing our business. We are doing the people's business. We are making their lives better, and we are going to continue to do it. And we can do the same as well in dealing with the constitutional protections and the protections of our national security dealing with the President of the United States.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, on so many of those bills that the gentleman mentioned, the gentleman failed to point out the poison pills that were attached to those bills to ensure that they went out in a partisan way.

Case in point is the bill the gentleman mentioned last night. I was there in the Energy and Commerce Committee. Again, you take a package of bills—here are two different alternatives. People wonder why Congress can't get things done.

You had a package of bills to lower drug prices that every Republican and every Democrat on the committee voted for, worked for months to put together—good work, sincere, dedicated work by the people on the committee of jurisdiction—passed out of committee unanimously to lower drug prices.

Then, last night, you saw a package of bills on drug prices that resulted, ultimately, in socialist-style price-setting, and it went out on a party-line vote. Not one Republican voted for it.

If you can imagine, in divided government—which we are, Democratic House, Republican Senate with a 60-vote requirement, and a Republican President. If you want to pound on a table and make statements, you can send out party-line vote after party-line vote and say they are over there in the Senate, because you know, just as well as everyone else knows, those bills won't become law.

But if you look at the bills that came out unanimously, why is it that you send out the party-line vote to the Senate instead of taking the bill that came out of committee unanimously that actually would get signed into law by the President?

Months ago, that bill would be signed into law, and families would be paying lower prices for drugs today. But you

won't send out the unanimous bill. You send out the party-line bill.

That is what happens over and over. People see it.

You talk about government funding. We are 16 days away from a shutdown, and you haven't even gotten an agreement with the Senate on a 302(b) number—in other words, how much we are going to spend.

You are going to have to have some give and take. You are going to have to work with the other side. But that work is not happening because you are focused on a secret, behind-closed-doors impeachment inquiry.

It would be helpful if we had that 302(b) number and you went and got the agreement, so go over there and talk to them.

But don't just send them party-line bills. Send them bills that are serious and have a chance to get signed into law. You know which bills those are.

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. HOYER. You know how this process works. Let them pass whatever bill they want; we will go to conference. We have our position; they have their position. It is led by your party. They haven't passed a single bill.

You talk about getting a 302(b). We sent them an offer 30 days ago. We haven't heard any response. Your party runs that.

You want to pass those bills? You think they are wonderful bills? Tell MITCH MCCONNELL: Pass those bills and send them over here. Let's see what we do with them.

We have a two-House legislature. Madam Speaker, the Republicans control the Senate. Let them pass a bill.

You say everybody is for it? Then it ought to pass. But don't say Democrats aren't passing. We passed appropriations bills. We have passed substantive bills on prescription drugs. We have passed substantive bills on healthcare. We have passed substantive bills on education. We have passed a substantive bill on the environment. We have passed climate change protection. We have passed lots of bills.

Now, if they don't like those bills, pass their own bills and send them over here, Madam Speaker. We will have a conference, and we will try to resolve it. That is how the legislative process works.

Don't say that we have to do your work and our work. We have a perspective, exactly as you did when you were in the majority, and you jammed us over and over again.

We are not trying to jam you. You had a perspective; we had a perspective. You passed your perspective. You knew the President of the United States, when it was President Obama, that he wasn't going to sign those. You knew the Senate wasn't going to pass them. Your position was, however: No, that is our position. We have a right to do that.

You were right. You had a right to do that.

But you want to deny us that right, like you want to deny us following your rules that you say are unfair.

Madam Speaker, I don't get it. We have done our work. We will continue to do our work. We will continue to do our work on both sides of the ledger, doing our constitutional duty and doing our legislative duty, which may be one and the same.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, hopefully, we can get that 302(b) number. Hopefully, Madam Speaker, if we want to talk about some of these bills, I would love if the majority leader would bring the package of bills that came out of committee unanimously, where every Republican and Democrat came together, not with poison pills, but to show that we can actually govern in a way that a bill can get signed into law, not party-line games.

We all know the issues with the Senate. We can both agree on the differences we have with how the Senate operates, where they require 60 votes, which means, in order to do anything, both sides—not one side, but both sides—have to come together.

NDAA, first time in over 40 years where an NDAA bill came out that sets the rules for our Department of Defense funding in a partisan way, it should have never been that way. It has never happened that way before.

Hopefully, we can find a way to come together and address some of these real problems and have real fairness.

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, it is a two-House legislature. One is led by Republicans; one is led by Democrats.

The reason we don't have 302(b) is because the Senate couldn't agree with itself on 302(b)s.

I talked to MITCH MCCONNELL in January of this year. MITCH MCCONNELL comes out of the Appropriations Committee; I come out of the Appropriations Committee. Both of us said that we need to get 302(a)s, which is the big number. You then subdivide it into 12 different committees. He agreed that we ought to do that, but he said that we have to have the President agree.

Very frankly, the Acting Chief of Staff, who served in this body, did not want to do that. The leadership of the Republicans had as much trouble with him as we had with him. Just ask Mr. Boehner and Mr. Ryan. He didn't want to have a deal. He wanted a CR. Actually, he wanted less than a CR because he wanted to go back to the sequester numbers.

That is why we don't have a 302(b), because neither the White House, Madam Speaker, nor the Acting Chief of Staff would agree.

Mr. MCCONNELL said: I am not going to do anything the President of the United States won't do.

Unlike being the independent, Article I body that we ought to be, acting independently and then sending it down to the President, and he makes a decision as to whether he wants to sign it or not, we are simply saying, in the United States Senate: If he won't agree with it, we won't put it on the floor. He doesn't have to veto it.

The public has to be so extraordinarily confused and angry about our unwillingness and inability to get our work done.

Madam Speaker, we have done our work. The Senate hasn't sent us anything. It is not like they have sent us something that we have rejected in a partisan way. They haven't sent us anything. They are too busy appointing judges that they think will reflect their ideological point of view.

So I am frustrated, along with the citizens of this country.

Everybody here who wants to do a 1-minute or a 5-minute is really frustrated. I get that. I am hopeful we can end this because we are not going anywhere.

But we are going to continue to do our job. We are going to continue to pass legislation that we think is for the people, to make their lives better, to focus on them, not us. We are going to focus on the Constitution and the laws of this country, to make sure that they are faithfully executed and carried out.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Maybe we would both agree that it might be helpful if the four leaders—the Speaker, the minority leader, the Senate majority leader, and Senate minority leader—got in a room and agreed not to leave until they come up with an agreement so we can actually do our business and not wait that 60 days.

The Secretary of Defense has made clear how damaging it is to our defense if we don't have a DOD appropriations bill passed and signed into law by the time this funding expires, how it hurts our men and women in uniform.

Hopefully, they would all agree to go and have that conversation and, ultimately, get that resolved. Then, we can take care of more of the people's work.

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

ADJOURNMENT FROM FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2019, TO MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2019

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet on Monday next, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

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

There was no objection.

CALLING ON VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT TO RELEASE MICHAEL NGUYEN

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Madam Speaker, today, I am here again, once more, to speak about an American citizen, Michael Nguyen, who is currently in prison in Vietnam on vague allegations and charges.

I thank my colleague, Representative KATIE PORTER, for her tireless advocacy on this matter, and the men and women at the State Department, including Ambassador Dan Kritenbrink, for their work and continued support.

It has been over a year since Michael was arbitrarily detained, hastily tried, and harshly imprisoned on claims that he plotted to overthrow the Government of Vietnam, which no one—and I repeat, no one—has seen any evidence of.

Earlier this year, Michael was convicted, along with two Vietnamese men, after a half-day trial. Michael was sentenced to 12 years in prison, which is longer than the two Vietnamese men received for the same charges.

Michael's family has struggled emotionally and financially with his imprisonment. His wife and four daughters only want him to come home.

He is currently appealing the length of his sentence.

As a co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Vietnam, I call upon the Vietnamese Government to do the right thing: quickly close this case and return Michael back to the United States and to his family.

□ 1230

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAMS IN OUR NATION

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

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, this week is National School Lunch Week. I rise today to recognize the importance of school lunch programs in our Nation, which provide low-cost or free lunches to more than 29 million children in nearly 100,000 public and residential child care institutions across the country. I have great appreciation for all the hard work the school nutrition service industry provides to ensure our children are fed nutritious meals.

As the former commissioner of agriculture in Kentucky, I understand the importance of child nutrition programs. Quality food service at school should be the least of a child's worries as they are navigating the school environment and engaging in new learning opportunities. The health and well-being of our Nation's children is something all congressional Members can