

their kitchen tables and look at their budgets with me? Will you listen to them and their ideas and their solutions so that these families can enjoy a piece of America's prosperity too? Mr. Secretary, will you do that? Will you not turn your back on them?

PRESIDENT SHOULD SUPPORT COALITION SUPPORTING FAIRER, SIMPLER TAX SYSTEM

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage the President to join the coalition supporting a fairer, simpler tax system. The President seems to think that the status quo is okay. He obviously has not been speaking to people in eastern North Carolina because they remind me daily that the status quo is out of control.

When the American taxpayer spends 5 billion hours and \$225 billion annually just to prepare their tax returns, something is clearly wrong. Mr. Speaker, the American people need relief, not only from their ever-increasing tax burden of 38 percent but from the lengthy and complicated tax code itself.

I ask the President to join those of us who are fighting to provide the taxpayers with the relief they so rightly deserve. Reject the status quo and support a fairer, simpler tax system for the American people.

CONGRESS TO LOOK INTO MATH-SCIENCE EDUCATION AND NATION'S SCIENCE POLICY

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

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, earlier a colleague from Maine registered concern about the results of the third International Mathematics and Science Study, which indicated that in the area of mathematics we were at the bottom of the list of Nations who took the test, with the exception of Cyprus and South Africa. And in science we are very little better. We only passed up Italy, Lithuania, Cyprus and one other country.

This is indeed a sad state of affairs. I appreciate my colleague's interest, and I also want to mention that the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGRICH), and the chairman of the Committee on Science, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENBRENNER), earlier during the previous session decided that this was a serious problem that had to be addressed by the Committee on Science. Mr. SENBRENNER has commissioned me to head up the effort on the part of the Committee on Science to look into math-science education as well as our Nation's science policy.

In particular, we will be having a hearing tomorrow in which we will

have Mr. Bill Nye, the Science Guy; a representative from Sesame Street; and others, talking in particular about the question of how we can maintain interest among our students in science and mathematics as they get older. I encourage the Members of the House to attend that hearing, and I am sure we will learn a great deal about what we can do as a Nation to improve our students' performance in mathematics and science in elementary and secondary schools.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SNOWBARGER). Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4 of rule XV.

Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 5 p.m. today.

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT ON H.R. 217, HOMELESS HOUSING PROGRAMS CONSOLIDATION AND FLEXIBILITY ACT

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to file on behalf of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services a supplemental report to accompany the bill (H.R. 217), to amend Title IV of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act to consolidate the Federal programs for housing assistance for the homeless into a block grant program that ensures that States and communities are provided sufficient flexibility to use assistance amounts effectively.

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

There was no objection.

HOMELESS HOUSING PROGRAMS CONSOLIDATION AND FLEXIBILITY ACT

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 217) to amend title IV of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act to consolidate the Federal programs for housing assistance for the homeless into a block grant program that ensures that States and communities are provided sufficient flexibility to use assistance amounts effectively, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 217

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Homeless Housing Programs Consolidation and Flexibility Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

(1) the United States faces a crisis of individuals and families who lack basic affordable housing and appropriate shelter;

(2) assistance from the Federal Government is an important factor in the success of efforts by State and local governments and the private sector to address the problem of homelessness in a comprehensive manner;

(3) there are a multitude of Federal Government programs to assist the homeless, including programs for elderly persons, persons with disabilities, Native Americans, and veterans;

(4) many of the Federal programs for the homeless have overlapping objectives, resulting in multiple sources of Federal funding for the same or similar purposes;

(5) while the results of Federal programs to assist the homeless generally have been positive, it is clear that there is a need for consolidation and simplification of such programs to better support local efforts;

(6) increasing resources available to reduce homelessness are utilized in the development of services rather than the creation of housing;

(7) housing programs must be evaluated on the basis of their effectiveness in reducing homelessness, transitioning individuals to permanent housing and self-sufficiency, and creating an adequate plan to discharge homeless persons to and from mainstream service systems;

(8) effective homelessness treatment should provide a comprehensive housing system (including transitional and permanent housing) and, while not all homeless individuals and families attain self-sufficiency and independence by utilizing transitional housing and then permanent housing, in many cases such individuals and families are best able to reenter society directly through permanent, supportive housing;

(9) supportive housing activities support homeless persons in an environment that can meet their short-term or long-term needs and prepare them to reenter society as appropriate;

(10) homelessness should be treated as part of a symptom of many neighborhood and community problems, whose remedies require a holistic approach integrating all available resources;

(11) there are many private sector entities, particularly nonprofit organizations, that have successfully operated homeless programs;

(12) government restrictions and regulations may discourage and impede innovative approaches to homelessness, such as coordination of the various types of assistance that are required by homeless persons; and

(13) the Federal Government has a responsibility to establish partnerships with State and local governments and the private sector to address comprehensively the problems of homelessness.

(b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this Act—

(1) to consolidate the existing housing programs for homeless persons under title IV of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act into a single block grant program for housing assistance for the homeless;

(2) to allow flexibility and creativity in rethinking solutions to homelessness, including alternative housing strategies and an improved service sector;

(3) to provide Federal assistance to reduce homelessness on a basis that requires recipients of such assistance to supplement the federally provided amounts and thereby guarantee the provision of a certain level of housing and complementary services necessary to meet the needs of the homeless population; and