

the Education and Workforce Committee, for the opportunity to address my safety concerns. This bill will help increase employment opportunities for 17-year-olds, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

H.R. 2327 addresses the ability of licensed 17-year-olds to drive limited amounts on the job. Under current law, minors are permitted to drive on the job within certain limits. However, the Department of Labor has narrowly defined these restrictions to the point that minors would be prohibited from driving on the job under most circumstances. Fines have been levied against automobile dealerships and other businesses for having teens complete such tasks as moving cars after they are washed or returning vehicles from the gasoline station.

The Drive for Teen Employment Act merely established a clear definition for limited driving, while maintaining injury-prevention measures on the job. This bill will allow limited driving by a 17-year-old in low risk and supervised settings and provides numerous safeguards, including: work-related driving is restricted to daylight hours; towing is prohibited; the driver must hold a state driver's license and must have completed a state approved driver education course; the driving is capped at 20 percent of the work week; minors must not have any record of moving violations at the time of hire; driving distance is limited to a 30-mile radius; route deliveries and route sales are prohibited; and urgent, time-sensitive deliveries are prohibited.

By establishing safety precautions and clear guidelines for employers, we can encourage much-needed employment for teenagers, while maintaining safety measures on the job. I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I have had a long interest in reforming regulations that do not pass what I call "The Stupid Test." I believe the teen driver regulation is a poster child for failing "The Stupid Test."

In 1993, the Department of Labor made a major regulatory change in the working definition of what incidental and occasional meant for licensed 16 and 17 year olds driving in the workplace. The change limits those under age 18 from driving more than one incident a week. The Department did this with no formal rule making and without informing any small businesses. Businesses first learned of the change when they received fines for non-compliance.

One such incident involved a 17 year-old student working in a high school sponsored co-op program at a local bank in Milan, Illinois. This young lady was in the bookkeeping department and would occasionally make trips to a branch bank four miles away. The bank was fined \$500 because of her occasional driving. Does it make any sense that these teens can drive an unlimited amount when they are not working, but while under supervised protection at work, they are completely prohibited from driving?

In Washington State alone, it is estimated that this regulation resulted in the loss of at least 1,000 job opportunities for teens. The irony is that while the Department of Labor is spending upwards of \$900 million annually on summer jobs programs, their own regulations is restricting the hiring of teens.

My co-authoris GENE GREEN and MARTY MARTINEZ have helped negotiate a good bill that, while not going as far as the bill reported

out of the House Education and Workforce Committee, it at least establishes some reasonable definition for what driving activities 17 year olds can perform. We reluctantly agreed to preclude 16 year olds from the bill after opposition from the Department of Labor.

Under the bill driving is allowed as long as it does not exceed one-third of an employee's worktime in any workday and no more than 20 percent of an employees worktime in any work week. The bill limits the daily delivery of goods to two trips, although under the bill an employers vehicle is not considered a good.

This legislation has been endorsed by the National Small Business United, National Automobile Dealers Association, National Community Pharmacists Association and the National Association of Minority Automobile Dealers.

We simply seek to bring a clearer, more reasonable standard for workers and business and hope you will support passage of H.R. 2327.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2327, the Drive for Teen Employment Act.

Under current law, minors are permitted to drive on the job under occasional and incidental circumstances, and until 1994, automobile dealerships across the country regularly employed minors to wash and detail cars, move cars on the lots, and occasionally drive an automobile to a nearby lot or gas station. These jobs provided employment for thousands of young people.

However, in 1994, the Department of Labor, without any rulemaking, decided to define occasional and incidental so narrowly as to prohibit minors from driving on the job under almost all circumstances. The Department then fined 60 Seattle area auto dealers nearly \$200,000 for alleged child labor law violations and caused nearly 1,000 16 and 17 year olds to become unemployed.

To address this problem, my colleague from Texas, Mr. COMBEST, introduced H.R. 2327. H.R. 2327, as passed by the Committee on Education and the Workforce, included provisions to permit 16 and 17 year olds to drive during daylight hours for no more than one-third of the day and no more than 20 percent of the work week. It also prohibited minors from towing or driving outside of a 50 mile radius from the job site.

Since the bill was reported by the Committee, several of my colleagues and I have worked with Mr. COMBEST to further restrict the provisions of the bill and make it even better. The bill before you today pertains only to 17 year olds, requires that the minor have a clean driving record, and limits driving to a 30-mile radius.

This bill merely removes the concerns small business owners have about hiring teenagers for jobs that require limited driving and establishes clear guidelines to assist the Department in enforcing a regulation under its jurisdiction.

At a time when, according to Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman, "despite the strong economy, young people living in high-poverty areas don't have jobs," H.R. 2327 makes good sense.

I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. FAWELL. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FAWELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2327, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title was amended so as to read: "A bill to provide for a change in the exemption from the child labor provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 for minors who are 17 years of age and who engage in the operation of automobiles and trucks."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FAWELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2327 and on H.R. 4257.

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

There was no objection.

#### CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4103, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the order of the House of Friday, September 25, 1998, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 4103), making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Friday, September 25, 1998, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of September 25, 1998 at page H8657.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report to accompany H.R. 4103, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I call up the conference report on the Defense Appropriations bill, which is a very good conference report, and it is a good defense appropriations bill as far as it goes. The