

Mr. REYNOLDS. I thank the chairman, and I just want to say that I support the Shimkus resolution as a co-sponsor. As he advances that debate in the House, I look forward to participating with him and assisting him in the endeavor of that resolution.

I also want to say this is an important time, while our President is overseas in that part of the world that NATO's whole universe is about, the aspect of defense of our allies. So this is a tremendous time to launch the further debate on NATO enlargement and reminding not only ourselves but the world of the criteria that NATO has established and that these countries are working diligently to meet that strong criteria so that they can be partnering in a NATO alliance in the future.

I believe enlargement is a subject that, while we only discussed it today, should hopefully bring a result in Prague in 2002.

Mr. BEREUTER. I thank the gentleman very much for his remarks. I thank all my colleagues. And I want to say that I appreciate the written remarks submitted by our colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), our Democratic senior member of the Committee on International Relations, who is very supportive for NATO expansion. His views are very consistent with those I think we expressed here tonight.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I want to commend the distinguished gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) for calling this special order on the recent meeting in Vilnius of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. We in the House are indeed well served to by DOUG BEREUTER's outstanding leadership of the House delegation to the NATO parliamentary exchanges. He is serious and thoughtful in his leadership, and he has served our nation well through his commitment to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

Madam Speaker, in NATO and in the growing European Union we have a powerful group of friends and allies who basically share our values and objectives. We have said during the Cold War—and I personally passionately believe it—that NATO was a defensive military alliance. I believe that today NATO is a defensive alliance.

I am completely supportive of NATO enlargement, once the countries which are candidates for membership meet the economic and political criteria that qualify them for membership. The three Baltic countries—Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia—are moving rapidly in this direction, and I strongly favor their admission into NATO. Whether it takes place in 2002, 2004, 2005 or 2006 is very secondary.

Madam Speaker, I want to make clear my strong belief that Baltic membership in NATO—or the membership of any other country in NATO—is not contrary to Russian interests. In fact, it is in Russia's interest to have the arena of stability and prosperity in Europe expanded to Russia's borders. It is clear that as democratic forces gain strength within Russia, these democratic forces will welcome the enlargement of NATO and the growth of stable democracies in adjacent countries. It is not in Russia's interest to have countries such as Belarus run by a dictator on their border. It is

in Russia's interest to have a country such as democratic Estonia—prosperous, free, and a member of NATO—to be near Russia.

I never accepted during the Cold War—and I do not accept now—the notion that NATO threatens Russia. There is no NATO leader that has the slightest ambition to invade or act in a way that is contrary to Russia's long-term interests. The NATO leadership hopes for the evolution of a democratic and prosperous and stable Russia. The leadership and the members of NATO want nothing more for the Russian people but an improvement in their economic conditions and the improvement of their political and civil liberties.

Madam Speaker, I disagree most strongly with the notion that we have to pay off the Russians in order to win their agreement to modify the ABM treaty in order to move ahead with our own system of missile defense. We should not truncate the natural growth of NATO in order to win concessions on missile defense, and we should definitely not allow Russian efforts at intimidation or blackmail to dissuade us from accepting the Baltic countries as members of NATO.

Madam Speaker, these were our goals with respect to Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland when they were accepted for NATO membership four years ago. These will be our objectives with Slovenia, Slovakia and all other countries that seek membership and are granted membership in NATO in the future.

COMMUNICATION FROM FORMER STAFF ASSISTANT OF HON. JIM MCCRERY, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Jennifer Lawrence, former staff assistant of the Honorable JIM MCCRERY, Member of Congress.

JUNE 7, 2001.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to formally notify you, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a criminal subpoena for trial testimony issued by the United States District Court for the Western District of Louisiana in a criminal case pending there.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that it is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House to comply with the subpoena.

Sincerely,

JENNIFER LAWRENCE,
*Former Staff Assistant to Congressman
Jim McCrery of Louisiana.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE JOHN CONYERS, JR., MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable JOHN CONYERS, Jr., Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 11, 2001.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena for production

of documents issued by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

JOHN CONYERS, JR.,
Member of Congress.

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AMERICA HAS URGENT NEEDS FOR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. HART). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Madam Speaker, I rise this evening to direct the attention of my colleagues to a task that I think is paramount in our Nation and our ability to be able to compete in the 21st century, and that is the task of improving the public schools in this country.

As the hour goes on, a number of my colleagues on the Democratic side have indicated they will join me as we offer a perspective on this critical issue facing our Nation, our States, our communities, and certainly the parents, teachers, and students of this country.

As communities throughout my district and really across this country celebrated the graduation season in the past few weeks, I believe it is an opportune time to look at what Congress needs to do to provide our schools the support they need to succeed in the 21st century.

It does not seem like it, but in just a matter of less than 2 months, school will be convening again all across America. Over 53-54 million students will head back to school, the largest number of public school students in the history of this country. At a time when the classrooms are going to be overcrowded, space will be at a premium and staffs will be challenged. Today my colleagues, Democratic colleagues who will join me, together we joined all of the members of the Democratic Caucus in signing a discharge petition on the bipartisan Johnson-Rangel-Etheridge school construction bill. American people understandably do not follow legislative process close enough to know what a discharge petition is or why it is important.

I regret that we even have to use it, but when there comes a time when the majority estoppels an issue as important as school construction for the children of this country, it is time for drastic action. A discharge petition is the only vehicle we have as ranking minority members to force the leadership to act, such as when they have blocked us from bringing up needed legislation. That is the only way that the Members have an opportunity to get it done. I would remind my colleagues and others that every Member of this body is elected by the same