

Hussein, perhaps we would be at peace today in trying to find diplomatic solutions; but now, it seems these very countries who are against U.S. action, who have made a 4-month national pastime of bashing the U.S., now they want to get U.S. tax dollars and help rebuild Iraq.

The Nethercutt amendment speaks to this, and I hope that the conference committee will keep that in the legislation.

OFFICE OF PEACE

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, in a moment I will introduce legislation with 46 cosponsors to create a Department-level office of peace and the Department of Peace is introduced at this moment when it seems that war is inevitable, when our troops are in the streets of Baghdad, when members of the administration talk about the possibility of invasion of Iran and the possibility of invasion of Syria.

This is the moment when we need to ask whether the war is inevitable or not. This is the moment when a Department of Peace can take steps to making nonviolence an organizing principle in our society and when we can create a structure in our government where we can strive to make war itself archaic.

Forty-seven Members of Congress have put their names on this legislation because we are at a moment in the history of our Nation and in the world where we need to be asking questions. Is war inevitable? Forty-seven Members of Congress say no. Is peace inevitable? The answer must be yes.

HOUSING ACTION RESOURCE TRUST

(Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, one of the main barriers of homeownership today is the down payment requirement from individuals that do not have the money. Do down payment assistance programs work? They do.

One example is in Rancho Cucamonga, California. The Housing Action Resource Trust, called HART, was formed in 1995; and in 1998, they started giving homeowners down payment assistance, and it is all private funds. Not a dollar of it is government funds.

What they have done is help 40,000 families actually achieve homeownership, and it is significant. Like I said, not a dime of it is government funds.

The HART gift funds can be used for down payment, closing costs, prepaid payments that can be used to remit buy-downs; and the main obstacle we have for moving people from apart-

ments and rental units to housing is basically they do not have the money.

There are programs that do work. The government needs to look at participating in this.

EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, 18 months ago, the Republican leadership during the debate on the first \$15 billion bailout for the airline industry promised that soon, promptly, we would consider employee relief, including financial assistance, health insurance and training for new careers. It is 18 months later, and those 150,000 airline employees are still waiting, 18 months of waiting.

The airlines project they will lay off another 70,000 because of the war with Iraq. Boeing has cut 30,000 workers. They are all still waiting for that financial assistance and extended unemployment package.

Finally, today, here on the United States House of Representatives floor for the first time, 18 months too late, we are going to take a vote on that issue; and we will see where people really stand, whether they are with the workers or they just want to bail out the corporations.

REGULATORY TURMOIL

(Mr. BACHUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BACHUS. We should be particularly concerned about the negative effects which needless regulatory uncertainty and policy turmoil are having on this country's telecommunications industry.

□ 1215

The United States' economy is very dependent on an efficient and effective telecommunication industry and the links they provide. Maintaining these important systems and building new advanced networks we are going to need requires a climate of regulatory stability. No one is going to invest heavily if they do not know what the fundamental rules of the game are.

The 1996 Telecommunications Act envisions the FCC coming up with a workable, judicially sustainable, competitive framework in short order. Seven years have passed since the act was signed into law, and according to most authorities, the FCC's latest decision is almost certain to be reversed and remanded once more.

In closing, Congress has a responsibility to the shareholders of these companies, to the hundreds of thousands of employees, and, most of all, to millions of consumers to end this turmoil. It is not good for anyone.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS FOOD DRIVE

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

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to mention a very important charitable project by our National Association of Letter Carriers, who have been engaged in this for several years. On the second Saturday in May, which will be May 10 this year, letter carriers in over 10,000 cities and towns will be delivering much more than mail on their routes. They will be collecting food donations left for them by their caring patrons on the 11th annual letter carriers national food drive.

I want to take this opportunity to commend the letter carriers for this incredible charitable endeavor. This effort by the letter carriers is the largest 1-day food drive in the Nation, and it has resulted in the last 10 years in over half a billion pounds of food donations to our local communities. I hope everyone listening will participate on May 10 by leaving a box of nonperishable food next to their mailbox before their mail arrives. It will help the estimated 30 million people who go hungry every day in America, including 12 million children.

Congratulations to our letter carriers for a job well done.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the motion to go to conference on H.R. 1559, making emergency wartime supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2003, and for other purposes, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 1559, EMERGENCY WARTIME SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2003

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 1559) making emergency wartime supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2003, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

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

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MR. OBEY

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. OBEY moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 1559, recede to the Senate on section 409 of the Senate amendment, providing 26 weeks of additional temporary extended unemployment compensation for displaced airline related workers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) will be recognized for 30 minutes, and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 8 minutes.

Madam Speaker, American citizens often hear Members of Congress talk in terms that they do not understand. They hear us talking about Blue Dogs, Blue Dog Democrats, they hear us talking about Yellow Dog Democrats. Sometimes they see us acting like lap dogs, and today I am afraid that the House may wind up genuflecting to Top Dogs, because that has been the general pattern on the issue that I am raising this afternoon.

After 9/11, the Congress passed a \$15 billion airline assistance package, \$5 billion in direct cash payments and \$10 billion in direct loans and loan guarantees. The Congress was asked at the same time, and a number of us have tried to get it done, but Congress had asked at the same time that we were bailing out the airline industry to also recognize workers within that same industry who were also losing their jobs and should have some help from the government. The Congress responded by saying, no, thank you.

Now, the bill that the House passed last week contained \$3.2 billion in cash payments for the airline industry on this go-round and the Senate bill contained a figure of slightly over \$2 billion. We are here today again to ask that if we are going to be bailing out the airline industry that we also provide some \$275 million in assistance to the workers in that same industry by providing an additional 26 weeks of temporary extended unemployment benefits for displaced airline-related workers.

Now, the administration has let it be known what their position is, and essentially they are opposed to this proposal. And what they are telling Congress is that, instead, we should work with the administration to make sure that any aid package is appropriately scaled and "appropriately based on free market principles." Well, I guess I am kind of new around here and naive around here, and I am not quite sure what those "free market" principles are when it comes to the airline industry.

To me, I think that the airline industry is a let's pretend industry, run by let's pretend capitalists who are on the public dole, and I do not mean Bob.

They are out here once again asking the taxpayers to help finance their survival. Now, we have had some of those airlines go bankrupt not once, not twice, but three times. I asked on the House floor last week how many times Continental Airlines had to go bankrupt before they were bankrupt. I still have not received an answer.

Now, I will fully grant that given the serious nature of the war, given the impact of 9/11, and given the fact that the airlines are a crucial part of our economy and our transportation system, I would fully grant that some kind of cooperative relationship between us and the airlines will be necessary in order to keep this economy healthy. But it seems to me that we ought to have some systematic way to assure that when we are bailing out the airline industry and its executives, that at least some of those taxpayers' dollars wind up trickling down to the workers who keep those airlines moving in the first place.

So that is the purpose of this amendment.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House, and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings or other audible conversation is in violation of the rules of the House.

Mr. OBEY. I assume that does not come out of my time, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It does not.

Mr. OBEY. So, as I was saying, lest anyone think that it is not needed, the airline industry itself estimates that we have had a 15 percent increase in unemployment in that industry since 9/11, and since January 1, we have seen another 15,000 layoffs.

So I would ask the Members of this House today to, for a change, let us not institutionally genuflect to the top dogs in this society. Let us keep in mind the needs of the underdogs and provide at least some modicum of assistance to the workers I am talking about.

Let me also explain that there will be a rollcall on this vote. I know that it may be possible that this motion could be adopted on a voice vote. But frankly, if we were to simply have a voice vote, it would not mean anything to anybody. It would be very easy to jettison this language in conference.

So I think to assure that this vote is a meaningful vote, let the chips fall where they may in terms of passage. To assure that it is a meaningful vote and not just a sleight of hand so Members can say, "Well, do not worry, airline worker, I voted with you. Of course, it was not a rollcall vote, and of course the leadership made us turn around in conference so that there would not be any." But I would urge Members to vote for the motion.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the motion to instruct.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this Democratic motion to instruct House conferees on the supplemental appropriations bill.

It's just. It's fair. And it enjoys bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate, even if the Bush administration has labeled it "objectionable."

In short, this motion would instruct House conferees to recede to the Senate provision providing an additional 26 weeks of unemployment compensation to workers in the air transportation industry.

This industry and its workers have borne the brunt of the continuing war on terrorism and have been wracked by our sluggish economy.

In fact, the industry is expected to lose \$6.7 billion this year.

Approximately 200,000 airline workers have lost their jobs since September 11, 2001, and another 70,000 workers are expected to be laid off.

Last week, the world's largest carrier, AMR Corporation's American Airlines, averted Chapter 11 bankruptcy by negotiating \$1.8 billion in labor concessions.

And U.S. Airways only recently emerged from bankruptcy after winning approval for \$900 million federal loan guarantee.

Last week, I also had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the industry and airline workers.

And they know that their fate is inextricably linked; that one cannot survive without the other.

Today, through this motion, we recognize that and say: What's fair for the industry is fair for workers.

In fact, members on both sides of the aisle want to help.

This motion would instruct conferees to agree to a provision that is very similar to bipartisan legislation introduced last week by our colleagues, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania and Mr. OBERSTAR of Minnesota [H.R. 1553, the "Air Transportation Employees Assistance Act"].

The Senate has already passed a plan to extend unemployment insurance benefits in its version of this legislation.

The Members of this body should do the same thing to aid this struggling industry, and its workers and their families.

That's precisely what this motion to instruct seeks.

I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the distinguished minority leader.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. If we may go first to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG).

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

I am sorry. Did the gentlewoman wish to go? I will always yield to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. PELOSI. I am pleased to yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, if the gentlewoman would yield to me briefly, let me explain that I thought we

had an understanding that I would explain the motion, that the gentleman would make her comments, and then the gentleman would close and we could yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Madam Speaker, I apologize to the gentleman. I guess I did not understand exactly. But that is fine with me. No problem whatsoever.

Mr. OBEY. Fine. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) for yielding me this time, and if that is not pleasing to the distinguished chairman of the committee, I am pleased to yield to him first. If it is okay, then I will proceed.

Madam Speaker, once again I wish to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) for his leadership on this important issue, important to America's workers. Today, we have an opportunity to do the right thing for America's aviation workers.

Both the House and Senate versions of the supplemental appropriations bill include financial assistance for the airlines, as they should. Aviation is an essential cornerstone of the U.S. economy. Both the House and Senate bills focus primarily on mitigating for the cost of security provisions required by the Federal Government, as those bills should have that funding. But we cannot ignore the workers who form the backbone of the aviation industry.

Madam Speaker, at least 150,000 workers in the aviation industry have lost their jobs since 9/11, including those who work for the airlines and related industries. Many of these workers have exhausted their unemployment benefits, and that was months ago. But with the industry still contracting, new jobs are impossible to find. Thousands more airline workers have lost their jobs since the Iraq war began and layoffs in the industry could reach 70,000 more. Concern about the exposure to the deadly SARS disease in Asia is now reducing air travel from the U.S. to Asia even further.

The Senate has included \$225 million for extended unemployment compensation for aviation workers. The House should recede to the Senate position.

□ 1230

Madam Speaker, it is the least that we can do. I urge Members to vote for relief for aviation workers. To support the Obey motion to instruct conferees, vote for the motion to instruct.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I am not really opposed to what the gentleman is suggesting here. The Committee on Appropriations did add \$3.2 billion to the wartime supplemental to deal with airline issues and to be helpful to the air-

line industry. So there is plenty of money to handle this issue, but I am going to vote against it because of the problems it could cause as we go to conference.

We have a tight schedule. The committees on both sides of the aisle have worked extremely well. Just a few days after receiving the President's request, the Committee on Appropriations reported the bill to the House. As Members know, last Thursday we passed this bill with an overwhelming vote in the House.

However, there are some significant differences between our bill and the bill presented by the other body. I just have the feeling this is going to be a fairly difficult conference because, while the House kept the bill very clean and close to what the President requested, to fight the war and provide for homeland security and to support those of our coalition who are helping us in this war effort, the other body, frankly, added quite a few things that were extraneous to the wartime issue; and that is going to make the conference a little difficult.

I want to get this conference completed. Leadership has advised me, as well as most of the Members, that we are not going to take our Easter district work period recess until this bill has left the Congress and has gone to the President since it is important to what the President is doing in Iraq. I will vote against this motion. I want to again emphasize we need to move this bill quickly. If the conference gets tied up for more than 2 days, we will not get this bill to the floor in time for the House to take its usual Easter recess. In addition, I am opposed to motions to instruct in general. I have no objection to what the gentleman wants to do, but it is just procedural for me. I think it could complicate the conference on this very important wartime supplemental.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Without objection, the previous question is ordered.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair

announces that she 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 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

NUTRIA ERADICATION AND CONTROL ACT OF 2003

Mr. GILCHREST. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 273) to provide for the eradication and control of nutria in Maryland and Louisiana.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 273

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 "Nutria Eradication and Control Act of 2003".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) Wetlands and tidal marshes of the Chesapeake Bay and in Louisiana provide significant cultural, economic, and ecological benefits to the Nation.

(2) The South American nutria (*Myocastor coypus*) is directly contributing to substantial marsh loss in Maryland and Louisiana on Federal, State, and private land.

(3) Traditional harvest methods to control or eradicate nutria have failed in Maryland and have had limited success in the eradication of nutria in Louisiana. Consequently, marsh loss is accelerating.

(4) The nutria eradication and control pilot program authorized by Public Law 105-322 is to develop new and effective methods for eradication of nutria.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to provide financial assistance to the State of Maryland and the State of Louisiana for a program to implement measures to eradicate or control nutria and restore marshland damaged by nutria.

SEC. 3. NUTRIA ERADICATION PROGRAM.

(a) GRANT AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of the Interior (in this Act referred to as the "Secretary"), subject to the availability of appropriations, may provide financial assistance to the State of Maryland and the State of Louisiana for a program to implement measures to eradicate or control nutria and restore marshland damaged by nutria.

(b) GOALS.—The goals of the program shall be to—

(1) eradicate nutria in Maryland;

(2) eradicate or control nutria in Louisiana and other States; and

(3) restore marshland damaged by nutria.

(c) ACTIVITIES.—In the State of Maryland, the Secretary shall require that the program consist of management, research, and public education activities carried out in accordance with the document published by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service entitled "Eradication Strategies for Nutria in the Chesapeake and Delaware Bay Watersheds", dated March 2002.

(d) COST SHARING.—

(1) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the costs of the program may not exceed 75 percent of the total costs of the program.

(2) IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS.—The non-Federal share of the costs of the program may be provided in the form of in-kind contributions of materials or services.