

our Founding Fathers, Mr. Leader, formed a House representing a diverse American public, from many regions of this country, many areas of every State. Every State has differences within that State. My State does. Your State does.

To say that the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) is only going to talk to those that he perceives as interested in improving that legislation is to say that a bill that passed this House by one vote after the roll was kept open for some 45 minutes is to say that at least half of this House will be excluded.

Mr. Leader, that is not in my opinion and in the opinion of this side of the aisle, and I believe in the opinion of the American people, the way they expect this House to run. It is not the gentleman from California's (Mr. THOMAS) view of what improves or does not improve this bill that counts. It is each of us who are elected to represent our constituents and put on the table the alternatives we believe improve that bill. They ought to be considered. We do not believe that is being done, Mr. Leader.

Mr. DELAY. If the gentleman will yield, I just have to say to the gentleman, I know the gentleman is trying to change the process of the House. We are not operating any differently than this House has always operated.

Every Member that wants to have input on this bill can find ways to have input. It has been expressed time and time again by the leadership on your side of the aisle and others that they do not want this bill. They want a different kind of bill and a different approach.

You have had that opportunity in presenting that approach and in presenting an alternative and a substitute for the will of the House, and the gentleman made a grand attempt to do that. He failed. He did not have the votes to do it.

In that process we went to conference committee. Those Members that are willing to work with, instead of obstruct, the process of getting a Medicare bill to this floor have been consulted on both sides of the aisle by many different people, not just the chairman of the conference committee. So the process is open and available to those who are willing to work with us and be constructive and productive in getting a bill so that the House can vote on it. That is the way this place works. It is the way it has always worked.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Leader, you and I may have a different perspective obviously. You recall, as I have discussed in the past, the Patients' Bill of Rights. Everybody was for the Patients' Bill of Rights. In fact, in the 106th Congress, as the leader will well recognize, when he was the whip and responsible for counting votes, the Patients' Bill of Rights passed this House with over 250 votes of people who saw it in a way that ought to pass, ought to be the law of the land.

As you will recall, the Speaker appointed eight out of the nine Republican conferees who had opposed the bill. Now, maybe that is the way the House in your recollection has always worked where 250 people vote for something. It never came out of conference, not surprisingly, when you had eight out of nine of the Republican conferees in the majority that opposed the bill that were in the conference. So apparently if it is on your side of the aisle and you oppose something, locking it up in conference is okay. If you are on our side of the aisle and you want to see a Patients' Bill of Rights or you want to see a Medicare prescription bill and you want to see a prescription drug bill that does not eliminate Medicare, that provides for affordable and accessible health care at a price that can be afforded by all of our seniors, then somehow you are perceived as not wanting to improve the bill and, therefore, is not worth being included.

As you know, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), one of the senior Members of this House, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) tried to have arrested not too long ago and thrown out of the Committee on Ways and Means by the Capitol Police.

You will recall that the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) has now gone to where the conferees, theoretically, were meeting and was asked to leave. The gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), the ranking Democrat on the Committee on Ways and Means, one of the seniors.

Now, I will remind the chairman that Mr. Rostenkowski chaired this committee and invariably made sure that Republicans were, in fact, included, and invariably when bills came to the floor, he had Republicans supporting those bills and they worked with him. And you will recall that he worked with the President of the United States when we were in the majority to pass the 1986 tax bill. So that may be your recollection, Mr. Leader, of how the House runs.

Mr. DELAY. If the gentleman will yield, my recollection is completely different than yours.

I can remember serving in the minority, too, and having the same frustrations that you have had. It is part of the frustrations of being in the minority.

As the gentleman understands, we are not operating in this regard any differently than the gentleman operated when you were in the majority. You work with people that want to get a bill. You do not waste a lot of time with people that do not want a bill. And then you give everybody the opportunity through the Rules of the House to participate either in the full committee, formal conference committee meetings or here on the floor of the House, and certainly ultimately expressing themselves with their vote.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, I agree with the leader. We disagree. Our recollections are not the same. Our experiences are not the same.

Now, I have been here a little longer than the leader, but we have both been here a long time, and when we were in charge you complained as well. Therefore, you can empathize, as you say, with the pain that we feel in the minority.

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But it is not the pain that we feel is so important, we want a bill. We may want a slightly different kind of bill than we think that the majority will report out on prescription drugs, but we want a bill. And the people who supported us want a bill, and they may want a bill that is slightly different; and democracy works when all sit down together and discuss their perspectives and try to forge a bill which accomplishes their objective. I do not think we are doing that. I lament that, and I do not think it is in the best interests of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, it is not in the quality of legislation that both the gentleman from Texas and I want to pass, even if we see that quality somewhat differently. I thank the gentleman for the information he has given us.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY,
NOVEMBER 10, 2003

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at noon on Monday, November 10, 2003.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT FROM MONDAY,
NOVEMBER 10, 2003 TO WEDNESDAY,
NOVEMBER 12, 2003

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on Monday, November 10, 2003, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, November 12, 2003.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR
WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON
WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF OFFICIAL OB-
JECTORS FOR PRIVATE CAL-
ENDAR FOR 108TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. On behalf of the majority and minority leaderships, the Chair announces that the