

am grateful for the focus of doing energy research for both renewables, but also alternatives, and although it was a vigorous debate, I want to say to my energy friends, the deletion of ANWR does not mean that we cannot be domestically sufficient, that we cannot resources to invest in domestic energy resources, particularly in the Gulf where the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON) and I offered an amendment to determine the amount of resources in the Gulf off the shores of Louisiana and Florida, in particular, and to do more reinvigorated drilling in that area where it is well assured that it can be done in a very scientific and environmentally safe area. Even though there are issues with the Energy Policy Act that I would be concerned about, as a Texan, I think it is vital that we become more independent as it relates to energy resources, that we begin to look at alternatives, begin to look at incentives for alternative motor vehicles and the \$1.8 billion for the electric power industry. My colleagues can be assured, to my friends in Texas, that we will never be totally independent of oil and natural gas of which we have much in this area. So this Energy Policy Act, that is, H.R. 6, should at least be considered a first step where we have come together, although sometimes in controversy, to put on the table a real energy agenda and policy for the 21st century and for this country. It is long overdue, and as someone who has practiced oil and gas law since about 1976, I can tell the Members that we will be better off having a road map that we can follow and that we can work with environmentalists and work with independents, small energy companies, who can be the backbone of an energy policy in this Nation.

So, Madam Speaker, I rise to support H.R. 2754 and the rule, as well as H.R. 6.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS).

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the rule, yet with some strong reservations also regarding final passage of the Energy and Water Appropriations Conference Report. But before I explain my reservation, I would like to recognize the many efforts of the gentleman from Ohio (Chairman HOBSON), the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKEY), ranking member, and other hardworking Members and their staffs who have made, over the past year, an effort to work with the Nevada delegation to address our serious concerns with the Yucca Mountain project.

For example, during initial House floor consideration of the energy and water bill this past July, the gentleman from Ohio (Chairman HOBSON) was gracious enough to grant the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) and I a colloquy on the issue of early ac-

ceptance of spent nuclear fuel at Yucca Mountain. In response to our concern, the gentleman from Ohio (Chairman HOBSON) agreed not only to strip the early acceptance language from the bill, but also to dedicate \$4 million in additional Federal spending to bolster security at our Nation's nuclear power stations. I am heartened by the gentleman from Ohio's (Chairman HOBSON) willingness to ensure that the early acceptance of spent nuclear language did not remain through the conference on this measure.

However, the conference report still dedicates \$580 million in taxpayers' dollars to the Yucca Mountain project, in my opinion, a fatally flawed Federal boondoggle that a majority of Nevadans, millions of Americans, and the Nevada Congressional Delegation strongly opposes.

Madam Speaker, I will vote yes on this rule; however, I will remain opposed to frivolously spending taxpayers' dollars and will never give up the fight against wasteful Yucca Mountain project spending.

□ 1130

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

Mr. REYNOLDS. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question is ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the resolution.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BONILLA. 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. 2673, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

#### APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 2673, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

Mr. BONILLA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 2673) making appropriations for Agriculture,

Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, 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 Texas?

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES 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 bill, H.R. 2673, be instructed to insist on the House position on prescription drug importation in Section 749 of the House-passed bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BONILLA) each will control 30 minutes.

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

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

Madam Speaker, to the uninitiated, people might think that this is a motion that deals with the agriculture appropriations bill. But, in fact, what is happening today is that conferees are being appointed, ostensibly, to deal with the agriculture appropriations bill but, in fact, the agriculture appropriation will then become the vehicle into which all other appropriation bills that have not yet passed the Congress will be dumped, producing one of those glorious omnibus appropriation bills that the Congress deals with at the end of the session when it has not been able to get its work done. So Members can expect to see this conference come back containing not only the material that is appropriate to the agriculture bill, but if the majority has its way, they can expect that the conference report will also contain the State, Justice, and Commerce appropriation, the Labor, Health, and Human Services appropriation, perhaps the VA-HUD appropriation, the D.C. appropriation, and perhaps several others. On this side of the aisle, we do not believe that those bills should be considered together. We believe that each of them should stand on their own merits.

We have another complicating factor, because this legislation will be used by the majority to try and pave the way for passage of its ill-conceived and misbegotten Medicare, so-called Medicare Reform Act. Now, that bill started as an effort to provide a prescription drug benefit for our senior citizens under Medicare. Instead, what is being produced on that score is a very weak, badly-shredded, partial benefit that does not even begin until years down the road, and the enticement of that prescription drug bill or that prescription drug coverage, I should say, is