scheduled by the DEA because they have to go chemical by chemical in order to act on this matter. They have to deal with this on a chemical-by-chemical basis.

We need Congress to give the DEA authority to be more effective and get ahead of this problem. We know that these drugs are coming into this country from Europe. That's where they're coming from, these compounds. There are some in Europe right now. Our goal is to get out in front of this before they have a chance to be exported into the U.S.

Another comment I heard about 325 researchers, well, 325 researchers because that's all who have applied to do this type of research. DEA is not in the business of turning researchers away, so I want to be clear on these points.

There's so much more that can be said on this. But again, research will not be impeded in any way. There is a mechanism, there is a process in place to do research on these Schedule I drugs. It's well established. This has nothing to do with the medical marijuana debate. I heard that argued earlier, too. We're talking about synthetic marijuana and synthetic cocaine. This stuff is dangerous. And, in fact, some would argue worse than the real stuff, so let's get to it.

This is about public safety. This is about the health of our constituents. We know what's going on. In fact, somebody pointed out to me today that a store in Washington, D.C., a few blocks from the Capitol, somebody is selling this stuff. My State and over 30 other States have seen this problem. They know what's happening across this country. We need to do something about it. DEA is alarmed by this. Justice is on board. DEA is on board. Let's do something for the good of the American people. Please pass H.R. 1254, the Synthetic Drug Control Act of 2011. It's in the best interest of the American people, and the best interest of our children. We're doing the right thing.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, the Synthetic Drug Control Act adds specified synthetic versions of drugs of abuse to Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act. These designer drugs generally mimic the effects of marijuana or of stimulants and can be unsafe, causing convulsions, anxiety attacks, dangerously elevated heart rates, and bizarre and dangerous behavior, among other conditions. Under current authority, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has difficulty taking action against these drugs because they fall outside existing statutory descriptions of Schedule I drugs. H.R. 1254 will enable DEA to take appropriate enforcement actions to get them off the street and away from our Nation's youth. I therefore believe it is critical that we deal with the threat these drugs pose.

I wish to note however that I have concerns with the basic underlying statute that would now apply to these listed substances through this legislation. In particular, I do not support the mandatory minimum sentencing provisions of the Controlled Substances Act for Schedule I drugs, provisions that under this legislation will apply to the listed synthetic drugs as they apply to all Schedule I drugs. Mandatory minimum sentencing inappropriately applies a one size fits all approach, eliminating the ability of judges to exercise discretion in determining an appropriate sentence in light of individual circumstances. The sentencing judge is in the best position to determine a fair sentence, having considered all of the evidence and having heard from the parties and the defendant.

I also believe that the administrative process for scheduling controlled substances should be improved, so that the Attorney General, with the help of the Secretary of Health and Human Services, can make scheduling decisions without resorting to help from Congress. I do not know whether such improvement requires legislation or regulation. I do know, however, that it is rarely a good idea for Congress to make scientific determinations such as are required to make good scheduling decisions.

Additionally, I believe it is incumbent upon DEA to reevaluate the recordkeeping and other regulatory requirements it imposes upon scientists who use controlled substances for legitimate research. The agency should ensure that such research is not impeded or discouraged through unnecessarily onerous requirements.

I recognize that it is not a simple task to strike the right balance, to exercise enough control to discourage abuse but not so much as to discourage research that may lead to important therapeutic advances and treatments. I intend to send a letter to DEA Administrator Michele Leonhart asking for a report on the restrictions imposed upon researchers, particularly those in academia who work with amounts of scheduled substances too small to pose a serious risk of diversion. I would like to know what if any improvements can be effected to eliminate or modify those requirements whose costs in time and resources outweigh their potential benefits in hindering research scientists from becoming drug abusers. I hope the Chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee and others will join me on the letter.

Finally, however, while I remain concerned about aspects of the underlying statute, the question before us is whether these substances should be controlled as would be accomplished through passage of this legislation. I believe the answer is yes, because of the danger to public health posed by the listed synthetic drugs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1254, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. 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 question 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, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 944, de novo;
S. 535, de novo;
H.R. 2360, de novo;
H.R. 2351, de novo;
H.R. 1560, de novo;
S. 683, de novo;
S. Con. Res. 32, de novo.

CALIFORNIA COASTAL NATIONAL MONUMENT CONSOLIDATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 944) to eliminate an unused lighthouse reservation, provide management consistency by incorporating the rocks and small islands along the coast of Orange County, California, into the California Coastal National Monument managed by the Bureau of Land Management, and meet the original Congressional intent of preserving Orange County's rocks and small islands, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FORT PULASKI NATIONAL MONUMENT LEASE AUTHORIZATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (S. 535) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to lease certain lands within Fort Pulaski National Monument, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR OUR WORKFORCE AND ENERGY RESOURCES ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 2360) to amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to extend the