Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, according to the CBO, the House Republican budget's cuts to SNAP would drive the poorest working families deeper into poverty and would increase hunger in our communities.

The Republican budget would cut as many as 60 million people from SNAP, most of whom are working, and cuts of this magnitude would be tragic for millions of hard-working Americans and their families. Basically, the House Republican budget makes people work harder for less.

Today, the Democrats introduced an alternative budget, and this Democratic budget works for hard-working Americans. First, it makes it easier to own a home; second, easier to send kids to college; third, easier to have a secure and enjoyable retirement.

Once again, the difference between the two: House Republicans want Americans to work harder for less; Democrats, on the other hand, want to help hard-working Americans.

VETERAN SPOUSES EQUAL TREATMENT ACT

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the LGBT veterans, who face discrimination by the very government they fought to defend, and I urge my colleagues to join me in ending this injustice.

Two years ago, DOMA was struck down, and most Federal benefits were effectively extended to legally married same-sex couples; yet an outdated law continues to bar access to VA benefits for LGBT veteran families in States that do not recognize marriage equality.

Our men and women in uniform do not serve in defense of a particular State, but of the United States. All veterans should have access to all Federal benefits, regardless of where they live, just as they do when they are in the military.

When President Lincoln laid out his vision for caring for veterans, he said we should support those ''who shall have borne the battle.'' He didn't say anything about discriminating against some because of who they love.

Please join me in ending this injustice, and support the bipartisan Veteran Spouses Equal Treatment Act, which I will introduce tomorrow.

SUPPORT THE DEMOCRATIC BUDGET

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

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today against the majority resolution, which fails to repeal sequestration.

I am proud to represent not one, but two Army bases, Fort Meade and Aberdeen Proving Ground, as well as an Air National Guard base at Martin State Airport. I am a member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee and am co-chair of the Army Caucus. I am the former ranking member of the Intelligence Committee.

I have sat through hearing after hearing in which the leaders of our Armed Forces have all testified that, if sequestration is not repealed, it will make our country weaker against the threats that exist today, from terrorism to cyber, including the Russia-China threat.

These outdated spending levels are putting our national security at risk and are damaging our credibility throughout the world. The across-the-board cuts of sequestration take away all ability to make strategic decisions on the things we keep and the things we cut. Budgeting is the science of priorities, not cutting across the board.

We must ensure our Armed Forces and intelligence community have the resources they need to do their jobs around the world and to protect our country and our families. The alternative Democratic budget released today does that by repealing sequestration.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 24, 2015.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 24, 2015 at 9:18 a.m.:

Appointments:

Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. CON. RES. 27, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 163 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 163

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 27) establishing the budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025. The first reading of the concurrent resolution shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the concurrent resolution are waived. General debate shall not exceed four hours, with three hours of general debate confined to the congressional budget equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget and one hour of general debate on the subject of economic goals and policies equally divided and controlled by Representative Brady of Texas and Representative Carolyn Maloney of New York or their respective designees. After general debate the concurrent resolution shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The concurrent resolution shall be considered as read. No amendment shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, and shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent. All points of order against such amendments are waived. If more than one such amendment is adopted, then only the one receiving the greater number of affirmative votes shall be considered as finally adopted. In the case of a tie for the greater number of affirmative votes, then only the last amendment to receive that number of affirmative votes shall be considered as finally adopted. After the conclusion of consideration of the concurrent resolution for amendment and a final period of general debate, which shall not exceed 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget, the Committee shall rise and report the concurrent resolution to the House with such amendment as may have been finally adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution and amendments thereto to adoption without intervening motion except amendments offered by the chair of the Committee on the Budget pursuant to section 305(a)(5) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to achieve mathematical consistency. The concurrent resolution shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question of its adoption.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

□ 1230

Mr. Speaker, I was looking around to see if folks were getting goosebumps as the Reading Clerk was reading the rule. I was. I think that if folks were honest with themselves, they would be getting some goosebumps, too, because we don't always have the most open of processes around here. It is hard. We have 435 of us. We all represent different districts, constituents that often have different hopes and dreams, different challenges that they face. It is not easy to craft a process that allows every Member of this institution to have a voice.

It is particularly not easy to allow every Member of this institution to have a voice on something as important as the budget of the United States of America. That is big, $3.8 trillion worth of big. And yet what you just heard from the Reading Clerk, Mr. Speaker, is that if we pass this rule, this rule that my colleagues and I on the Committee on Rules sorted out yesterday, if we pass this rule, we will begin the process that will allow a debate on every single budget submitted by every single Member of this House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have written those budgets in the past. That is not an easy job. There is a reason we are not going to consider 435 budgets. It is a big, big job. But more than being big in that it requires hundreds and hundreds of hours, it is big in that it requires you to put your money where your mouth is. That is not a task that folks often step up to the microphone to take on in this town, Mr. Speaker, but today we have budgets from the Progressive Caucus; we have budgets from the Democratic minority on the Committee on the Budget; we have budgets from the Republican Study Committee; we have budgets from the House Committee on the Budget and more. Every group that decided that they didn't run for this job to make campaign speeches but they ran for this job to make a difference has a chance to put their money where their mouth is.

My friends in the Progressive Caucus, Mr. Speaker, if we pass this rule, we will be allowed to vote on a Progressive Caucus budget. My back-of-the-envelope calculations suggest that their budget proposes increasing taxes by almost $7 trillion—$7 trillion. I don't support that kind of tax increase, but by golly, we ought to have a conversation about it. There are folks who are down here who are willing to recommend it. We should be willing to count the votes and see if it wins or whether it loses.

I sit on the House Committee on the Budget as well as the Committee on Rules, Mr. Speaker. Our budget doesn't raise taxes at all, at least not the tax rates. We believe if you implement a responsible budget, we are going to see the economic engine of America begin to churn once again. We believe revenues are going to rise because it turns out, if you don't make any money, you can't pay any taxes. If you get the economy going, tax revenues begin to take care of themselves. Reduce about $5.5 trillion in spending, that is what the House Committee on the Budget proposes.

I don't know where the votes are going to shake out, Mr. Speaker, and I am excited to find out. So often you come to the House floor, it has been pre-scripted: The votes have been counted; the process has been closed; it is just more of a show up and vote to give it some finality. But not so today.

If we can come together as a Committee on Rules and pass this rule, if we can come together as a body and begin this debate, I don't know which budget is going to pass at the end of the day, but I know this: I know America will be the better for us having a process that includes absolutely every voice in this Chamber, and I know that our chances of turning this budget process, this collection of hopes and dreams that are in a document into the law of the land to make a difference in the lives of families in each of our districts back home, the chances of that happening will be much, much greater.

Mr. Speaker, I have got lots to say about the budgets we have introduced, I have lots to say about the numbers that are behind those budgets, but I don't want to slow down what I know is going to be a bipartisan day and a bipartisan budget week.

So, with that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we have some good economic news: the private sector has added 12 million new jobs over the last 60 months, 5 years; our national unemployment rate is down to 5.5 percent; we have reduced the deficit from 9.8 percent of our economy to nearly 3 percent; 16.4 million people now have affordable health care who didn't have it before. These are good economic indicators, and we are moving in the right direction, but there is more to do to ensure that our economy gets and stays stronger.

What we can't afford to do at this critical juncture is endanger all of the progress we have made by pursuing this drastic austerity agenda, and that is what the Republican budget is. They have an almost religious commitment to slashing government to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy. So they propose severe cuts to everything except the military, even though it means destroying Medicare coverage that was promised to seniors, cutting education funding that we need to help our children compete in the global economy, literally taking food out of the mouths of the poor, and snatching health insurance away from millions who now have access to affordable care coverage for the first time.

Not only would the House majority raise taxes on the poor and give a $50,000 tax break to millionaires—a play that some like to call the reverse Robin Hood—but the House majority would slash funding for bridges and roads and gut funding for law enforcement and schools, double down on trickle-down economics and dynamic scoring, a failed and discredited set of policies that we know don't work.

That is how the House majority wants to govern the greatest democracy on Earth, by cutting our way to prosperity. Not only is it dangerous, it is mathematically impossible. It just doesn't add up. But don't take my word for it. Here are some of the reactions to the Republican budget from the majority's allies and its own members.

The American Enterprise Institute said about this budget: ''The House GOP leadership took the easy way out.''

A Republican Member and Army veteran said that this budget ''makes our country weaker.''

Another member of the House majority said: ''I am tired of seeing gimmicks in the budget process; I am tired of seeing gimmicks in the legislative process.''

Finally, summing it up nicely, one Republican Member said, ''It's all hooey.''

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD several news reports documenting the criticisms of the GOP budget.

[From CNN, March 18, 2015]

HOUSE GOP MEMBERS THREATENING TO TAKE BUDGET DOWN OVER DEFENSE

(By Deirdre Walsh)

WASHINGTON.—A sizeable bloc of House Republicans are vowing to defeat the GOP budget that was unveiled on Tuesday, arguing it shortchanges defense programs at a time that multiple national security threats around the world means Pentagon spending should be boosted.

''As a Republican I do not want our budget to go down. But as a veteran and somebody who has served in the Army I am not going to be part of something that I believe that makes our country weaker,'' Florida GOP Rep. Tom Rooney told reporters Tuesday.

Failure to pass a budget won't trigger any crisis—budget resolutions are nonbinding and essentially symbolic documents. They do set spending levels for various government agencies and outline the party's priorities for reforming entitlement programs and the tax code, but they lack the force of law.

But if House Speaker John Boehner can't cobble together enough votes from his own members for a budget, he will add another embarrassing setback to a pile of failed efforts this year. Boehner and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell pledged that total GOP control of Congress meant they would prove their party can govern and showcasing a unified budget is key to that pledge.

Last month, Ohio Republican Rep. Mike Turner, a senior member of the Armed Services Committee, got 70 House Republicans to sign a letter insisting that defense programs receive a minimum of $561 billion that was included in President Barack Obama's budget plan.

Republican budget writers, however, were put in a box because of the automatic across the board spending cuts, known as sequestration, put into place by a previous budget law. Those cuts cap defense spending at $523 billion.

To address concerns from defense hawks, the House Budget Committee used an accounting trick and added more than $30 billion in defense money to the ''Overseas Contingency Operations,'' an emergency fund that doesn't count toward their total spending number. On top of that money the committee created a separate $20 billion reserve fund to add more savings from other programs and promised to set both pots of money aside for defense.

But multiple House Republicans told CNN the move is merely a gimmick.

''I don't think that it's fair game—I think it's fairy dust stuff,'' Rooney said.

The top Democrat on the House Budget Committee, Rep. Chris Van Hollen, also

seized on the way Republicans structured Pentagon money, saying on Wednesday the GOP budget ''plays a shameless shell game with our defense spending. It would make Enron accountants blush.''

Boehner and his lieutenants also know some conservatives won't back the measure because they want bolder reforms, but threat from Republicans who want to see bolstered defense spending is real.

GOP Rep. Adam Kinzinger ticked off a list of flashpoints across the globe—ISIS in the Middle East, Ukraine, Boko Haram—that weren't major threats in 2011, arguing the trend shows the need to respond to growing threats, not cut back.

''It's a totally different world we live in and I think we have to recognize that,'' he told CNN, adding he's not sure how he will vote on the current measure and hopes it will be changed.

House Republican leaders also can't afford to lose more an a couple dozen of their own members on this vote, because Democrats will surely oppose the measure which repeals Obamacare and cuts food stamp and education programs.

There remains hope by some in the GOP, though, that they can strike a balance that works for the majority of the caucus.

But even if House Republicans figure out a way to pass this budget, the constraints on future proposals will persist until Democrats and Republicans broker a compromise to do away with the automatic cuts that they agree are unworkable for both domestic and defense programs.

''Both sides need to come together and put their grown up pants on and figure out how do we overcome this issue,'' Kinzinger said.

A budget resolution brokered between the two chambers is supposed to be negotiated by April 15th so spending panels can move forward with their work.

[From AEI, March 17, 2015]

HOUSE GOP 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION IS DOA

(By Mackenzie Eaglen)

Even though House Republicans just unveiled their draft budget for the next ten years, it is already painfully clear how this is going to end for defense.

1. The House budget resolution will not have enough votes to pass as written. There will be no conference with the Senate as a result.

2. The defense appropriations bill that passes the House will match the legal spending caps for the core defense budget at $499 billion for 2016.

3. Congress will seek to add additional emergency supplemental funds—or overseas contingency operations (OCO) money—for defense above President Obama's levels, but much of it will ultimately be stripped out during floor debate.

4. The defense spending bills that pass in both chambers will not become law. Most likely, the federal government will start the fiscal year operating under another continuing resolution (CR).

5. All eyes will turn to the Budget Committee chairmen to craft a follow on to the Ryan-Murray Bipartisan Budget Act to stanch the bleeding and triage the patient (defense) while providing some fiscal certainty and relief for the military later this summer or early fall.

Only after this long, torturous path to the end will leadership finally understand why the House Republican budget blueprint for 2016 is wholly insufficient to provide for America's military. First, the budget limits base defense spending to about $499 billion in 2016, in line with caps mandated under current law. This is a budget $35 billion below what President Obama has requested, and about $112 billion below what former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates thought would be necessary for the Pentagon when he crafted his final budget in 2012.

As an attempt to appease both budget and fiscal hawks, the House budget seeks to offset a lower base defense budget by increasing Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) ''wartime'' spending. That is because these emergency funds are exempt from budget caps and essentially ''off the books.''

While the House GOP budget would ostensibly increase Pentagon OCO funding to about $90 billion compared to the Obama administration's 2016 request of roughly $51 billion, much of this increase is an illusion. First, the plan uses a budgetary procedure known as a deficit-neutral reserve fund to increase OCO spending by more than $20 billion. Reserve funds call for increased spending in certain areas but only upon the condition that offsetting cuts or revenues are generated elsewhere.

Without corresponding deficit reduction, reserve funds do not lead to increased spending. This means that while the House plan promises about $39 billion in OCO spending over the president's request, about half of this increase will not materialize.

Realistically, the Pentagon should expect no more than about $569 billion from the House budget between base and wartime spending—well under the $585 billion the president requested.

Even if taken at face value, the OCO increase contained in the House budget will not make up for years of neglected Pentagon modernization and readiness. The reality is that the base budget and war spending accounts buy different outcomes and effects. Emergency funds buy mostly perishable items like readiness, maintenance, training, and war-related consumables like fuel. This makes OCO spending the equivalent of a sugar high. It contains empty calories that are rapidly consumed by ongoing operations, but does not provide for the long-term health of the military. Only robust and predictable base budgets—as the bipartisan National Defense Panel recommended—can provide long-term funding for readiness, force structure and modernization.

Moreover, by relying on debt-financed supplemental money to put a Band-Aid on the military's growing wounds, the House budget provides a false sense of accomplishment of having ''fixed'' defense. The unfortunate reality is that it does not. While the budget does propose increased defense spending in the future, the only year that matters is 2016. And, in 2016, the House GOP plan keeps current spending caps locked in. Not only is that insufficient, but the president is sure to veto the defense spending bill when it ultimately hits his desk at these levels.

For three and a half years, the military has languished under the Budget Control Act's irresponsible defense cuts as threats around the world have increased. While both political parties share in the responsibility for passage of the Budget Control Act, the GOP now controls Congress. The House budget resolution is clear that defense is only one priority of many, and one far down the line at that.

The House GOP leadership took the easy way out—politically and budgetary. This resolution will do little to draw support from policymakers with a deep understanding of the crisis in defense and will likely end up failing for not pleasing any bloc in the party, including defense hawks, fiscal hawks and appropriators.

For the Pentagon, this means another long year of budget uncertainty with no foresight into how or when the budgetary process will end and at what spending levels. That hurts not only the military, but taxpayers as well since it creates inefficiency and drives up program and planning costs across the largest federal agency.

[From The Examiner, March 17, 2015]

CONSERVATIVES QUESTION 'GIMMICKS' IN HOUSE GOP'S DEFENSE BUDGET

(By Tara Copp)

Republican budget leaders announced a fiscal 2016 plan Tuesday that appeases the defense hawks in their party by nearly doubling wartime spending, but the move has prompted pushback from their most conservative flanks, highlighting the challenges ahead.

Nine conservative House Republicans who hosted a discussion with reporters shortly after the budget's release said they want ''to get to yes'' on the GOP's plan, but they raised concerns about the plan's direction.

They questioned whether additional military spending has been properly vetted, noted that the sequester-immune account boosting military spending is not in line with the promises they made to their constituents to deliver a balanced budget, and pointed out that the added defense needs will require concessions to Democrats that will further distance the party from its political goals.

''Republicans are in the majority, but conservatives are not,'' said Rep. Thomas Massie, R-Ky. But he added that the final bill will need to address conservatives' concerns. ''There are a lot more conservatives than are at this table today.''

Lawmakers said they specifically invited four officers and agents to testify.

The members were also doubtful that they could garner enough intra-party support for the blueprint to move the bill through on a process known as reconciliation, due to differences on spending within their party.

Reconciliation, if enough Republicans agree to it, would allow the budget to be passed on a simple majority, effectively cutting out Senate Democrats' ability to block it.

''We need to make sure we are the party of fiscal conservatism,'' said Rep. Justin Amash, R–Mich. ''I understand some of the concerns from defense hawks who want to blow through the [spending] caps. But I'm tired of seeing gimmicks in the budget process. I'm tired of seeing gimmicks in the legislative process.

''At the end of the day, if you want to increase spending on programs Republicans like, you are going to have to accept some compromise for Democrats. So for those who are pushing for higher spending, they'd better be prepared to go to higher spending on Democratic programs and possibly tax increases.''

In the 2016 plan, which House Budget Committee Chairman Tom Price, R–Ga., announced Tuesday, keeps the Defense Department's baseline budget to the $523 billion sequester cap—but then adds another $94 billion in the wartime fund known as the overseas contingency operations account, which is not subject to sequester caps.

''That's one of the issues I am having with the budget,'' said Rep. Raúl Labrador, R–Idaho. ''I think if you are going to plus up military spending you should have to do it within the budget—not in a separate [wartime] account. I think we have to ask the fundamental question, 'what is all that money being spent on in the military? It's not a question that Republicans are willing to ask.''

Price's assurance that defense could be beefed up under a balanced budget also was questioned.

''I don't know anybody who honestly believes we are going to balance the budget in

10 years. It's all hooey,'' said Rep. Ken Buck, R–Colo. Buck said with winding down operations in Afghanistan and the end of the 2008 financial crisis, it is now time to make push difficult spending cuts to balance the budget.

''We continue to put off the pain,'' Buck said.

Labrador said it's not a question of defense as a priority, but the willingness to scrutinize defense spending.

''I want to protect the military as much as anybody. But it seems we have an unquestioning disregard for what its actually being spent in the military sometimes as Republicans, and I have a concern about that.

''So now what we are going to do is . . . put it in the [overseas contingency] account and we are going to forget about the promises that we made to our constituents that we are going to balance the budget,'' Labrador said.

Rep. Jim Jordan, R–Ohio, said he was ''leaning toward yes'' in supporting the additional Pentagon spending, but that he wanted to see the final bill. ''Obviously we want to do everything we can for national defense, but we understand the dynamic we are in,'' Jordan said.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. The Republican budget would force hardworking families to work harder for less. The proposal turns Medicaid into a State block grant, makes students pay more for tuition, decimates the Pell grants for college tuition, slashes food stamps, and turns Medicare into a voucher program for the future recipients, all the while keeping billions of dollars in tax breaks for Big Oil.

Today, Medicare guarantees insurance coverage for seniors, but imagine with me, if you will, a world in which Medicare is just a fixed amount voucher. Instead of insurance, your grandparent is given a set amount of money and is sent out on his or her own to negotiate with multinational companies; and if they need a medical plan that is more expensive than that voucher, the balance comes straight out of their pocket, or, if they can't afford it, they have no insurance. Not only does the budget show a clear disdain for working families, middle class families, students, and the elderly, but it was so haphazardly drafted last week that the media exposed a drafting error in the bill that revealed an additional $900 million in cuts. Imagine that, nearly a billion dollars that had been overlooked.

What is more, the House majority is playing fast and loose, using budget gimmicks to violate agreed-upon spending caps in the sequestration and to fund critical long-term Department of Defense needs out of a temporary war slush fund, the overseas contingency operations account, a slush fund the use of which Republicans decried just last year for undermining the budgetary process.

The Secretary of Defense, Dr. Ashton Carter, has highlighted the need for predictability in the Department's budget. He would like to know from one year to the next what is a gimmick and what is real, something that the House majority refuses to ensure. Ashton Carter, Secretary of Defense, says the only way that he can provide funding for the military is through stability, not through slush funds, spending caps, and budget games.

This is how the majority chooses to run our government: with tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires, with financial incentives for Big Oil, tax breaks for corporations that ship their jobs overseas, and tax policies that burden the people whose heads are barely above water. But, most importantly, it hurts the SNAP program, when thousands, millions of Americans go to bed hungry every night. How dare we threaten the very thing that gives them some peace of mind and some food to eat. That is also, by the way, an agriculture program that our farmers depend on to help them make a living.

Mr. Speaker, let's take a different course. Let's grow the economy from the middle class out, not try to hope something will trickle down on it. Let's fix our crumbling roads and bridges, and let's invest in our kids and make it easier to go to college, not harder. Let's respect the contribution of our Nation's seniors and make certain that they have the stability that they need in their health care to make financial decisions with some degree of certainty. We could do that by adopting the Democratic alternative. And while my colleagues in the minority might be getting fatigued saying this over and over that what we have isn't just a list of numbers, it is a statement of our ideals, instead of a slash-and-burn budget that puts at risk the economic growth of the last 5 years, we propose investments in our infrastructure, in our children, in our economy, and in our future.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am not sure if I was clear when I got started, and I apologize if I was not. We are going to vote on every idea that folks have. We are going to vote on every budget that was introduced. If you have a plan about how to better run this Nation, you don't need to complain about somebody else's vision; you are allowed to bring your own vision to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, we all care about men and women back home in our districts. What you can see on this chart is the interest spending alone under current law in year 2025. That is the 10th year of the budget window, almost a trillion dollars in interest alone. When we hear about what the spending priorities are that each Member of this Chamber has, we have to ask ourselves, so what are you doing to balance the budget so that interest doesn't consume it all?

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, under current law, if we don't make necessary changes, we are going to be spending more on interest alone on the national debt than we are on all defense issues combined. We are going to be spending more on interest on the national debt than we spend on Medicaid, our largest health care program, to help those constituents in need in our district. If you care about folks who are in need in your district, you care about balancing the budget, because we all know that in a debt crisis, the folks who get hurt the most are the folks who are most dependent on government services.

Mr. Speaker, in this great festival of democracy that is the budget process, we have a budget before us today that purports to balance in 6 years. The Republican Study Committee has introduced that budget. We are going to have a vote on it today. We have the budget that came out of the House Committee on the Budget. It purports to balance in 10 years. We are going to have votes on budgets in this process, Mr. Speaker, that anticipate balancing never—never.

The President's budget, for example, Mr. Speaker, the President's budget projects $2 trillion in new taxes—$2 trillion in new taxes—and never balances. It doesn't balance next year; it doesn't balance 10 years from now; it doesn't balance 20 years from now. It balances never. Every time we borrow a dollar from our children or our grandchildren, we are promising, we are committing either an additional dollar in taxes on those same children and grandchildren plus interest in the future or an additional dollar in benefit cuts.

Mr. Speaker, we ought to have this robust debate about our spending priorities, but it ought to start from the position that we have an obligation to pay for the bills that we are running up today. I say to my friends, these are not small things that we are arguing about. I want to talk to you about how do we invest more in transportation. I want to talk to you about how do we invest more lifting people up from that bottom rung of the ladder to the next rung of the ladder, to the next rung of the ladder.

□ 1245

I want to talk about how to invest in America, but every time we vote for a budget that doesn't balance, we threaten that future. We have more in interest payments on the national debt than on all national security combined.

I don't know that we are going to find that agreement today, Mr. Speaker, but if we pass this rule, again, we will be able to begin that process where all of the ideas will be debated.

I just encourage my friends, when each budget comes to the floor, ask this question: Do we plan for balance ever? Do we anticipate ending the added burden on our children ever? Do we anticipate mortgaging our children's future for as far as the eye can see, or do we anticipate taking responsibility?

We have got a lot of budgets to choose from, a lot of opportunities to take responsibility for. Mr. Speaker, I encourage my friends to support this rule so that we will be able to bring those bills to the floor.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), a member of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentlewoman from New York.

Mr. Speaker, this is the time of year where we begin to debate our Nation's budget, ostensibly, our plans for the fiscal future of our Nation.

There was a time, far ago in the past, before the invention of the Ryan budget and the Price budgets, when this time of year represented an honest, informed discussion of our different views of the future of our Nation and how to restore fiscal stability.

Since the Ryan budget, though, which says it balances, but doesn't; which includes tax revenue for laws that it says it repeals; which creates fiscal growth out of thin air; this discussion, unfortunately, has devolved into nothing more than political theater.

Somehow, this year, as we consider this rule today on the first ever Price budgets, the process has fallen even further. Gimmicks are being stacked on gimmicks. The Budget Control Act and its caps are law, and everyone on my side of the aisle stands ready to work together to come to a compromise solution that allows for both our domestic spending needs to be met as well as our national security needs.

But that is not the discussion we are having. Instead, we have a budget—or budgets—which completely circumvent common sense and budgetary convention by adding billions of ''base budget'' money to the overseas contingency account, essentially giving President Obama a record slush fund to engage in wars of his choice without consulting the United States Congress.

Those are the Republican plans before you. What we have is a fictional budget. But then, that fictional budget wasn't enough for everyone. So here we are, being asked to pass a rule which looks a lot like the rules you might see at an auction at the county fair. The most votes wins the blue ribbon.

This isn't the county fair. This is the United States Congress. This is our official budget plan of a major American political party for fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

I reject this rule today. We can do better. We can have an honest discussion about our budget priorities and about restoring fiscal stability for the next generation. We deserve a serious proposal rather than this fun and games and gimmicks that we have before us under this rule.

I encourage my colleagues to oppose the rule.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds to say to my friend, that is what is so wonderful about this process. The days for pointing out who is so wrong and their ideas are so bad are left for a campaign season. This is the day where you bring your ideas to the floor of the House, and every single idea that was offered is going to be considered. Mr. Speaker, that doesn't happen by accident.

At this time it is my great pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), the chairman of the Rules Committee and an outspoken advocate for trying to bring these ideas to the floor, without whom we would not be able to be here today.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia, who represents not only the Rules Committee but conservatives from across our Conference on the Budget Committee. I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) for bringing this bill to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, we had an opportunity to have Chairman TOM PRICE come and speak with us about the budget and what costs what and what decisions we wanted to make and what direction we were going to go.

It was really pretty simple. He said he is presenting a budget that is going to balance. He is presenting a budget that is going to fund our military properly. And he has got a budget which is one we cannot only understand but believe in.

One of the questions I asked him yesterday was: Mr. PRICE, how much does the Affordable Care Act, known as ObamaCare, cost the taxpayer and the budget? He said: You know, I don't know, but I'll get back to you. Well, by the end of the hearing, he said—what he could figure—it is $108 billion.

Now, I have not checked this out. In fairness to TOM PRICE, he is allowed to go and doublecheck everything. That was a cursory view.

Mr. Speaker, if that is true, and if I accept the figures that the gentlewoman, the ranking member of the committee, said of the number of people who are on ObamaCare, the Affordable Care Act—about 12 million—if you just do simple multiplication, 12 million into $108 billion, we are talking literally every single recipient would be costing this government more than $5 million per person for their insurance.

It is staggering. It is staggering that our friends, the Democrats, passed—it took us all day—a bill that they told us at least 24 million people who were uninsured would be on it, and a whole bunch of other people, and now here we are some 4 years later, a whopping total of 12.5 million at a cost of $100 billion or more. And yet they come to the floor and look at us like we are some self-righteous group of people because we want to balance the budget and change the direction.

Mr. Speaker, this budget is not about doing away with the Affordable Care Act. It is about properly looking at the money that comes in to the Federal Government and us properly allocating it back out. And $108 billion for 12 million people is immoral. It is unconscionable. And yet that was the testimony yesterday. Once again, I am going to have to look at it again, and I know Chairman PRICE is going to as well.

Mr. Speaker, this is why we do budgets. We do budgets so that we do ask the tough questions, so that we can put a pencil to the millions, billions, and trillions that the American taxpayer sent us here to do.

For us to be on the defensive by our friends, the Democrats, about wanting to balance the budget, about us wanting to do the things that will balance out and not only netting them out to where we don't spend more than what we take in, but being on the defensive because we are doing the right thing to sustain America's greatest days ahead of us, I think is a real mistake for the people who make the argument against us, when they are the people that passed—without one Republican vote—what we were told is $108 billion for 12.5 million people.

Mr. Speaker, we have got to get away from this yelling and screaming and go to the numbers. And that is what TOM PRICE did. That is what Mr. WOODALL is doing. They are looking at how we are spending our money and what we are getting as a result of it. And if it really is true that for everybody who is on this Affordable Care Act, the true cost to the taxpayers is over $5 million for each person, then shame on us for not knowing, asking, and understanding. And that is what we are doing today, Mr. Speaker.

TOM PRICE, our young chairman from Georgia, actually has taken time to go and look at the budget. He is also doing a lot of other things that the gentleman from Texas, MIKE BURGESS, gave him credit for yesterday, where he is looking at some $800 billion—almost a trillion dollars—that is sitting in agencies, not spent yet, that has previously been given to them. The taxpayer paid for it, and they are just sitting there waiting to spend the money.

Mr. Speaker, it is Republicans, it is TOM PRICE, it is ROB WOODALL, it is the members of the committee who have taken the tough votes and have done their homework. And that is what we are presenting here today. We are presenting the hard work from a committee called the Budget Committee to come and look at, once a year, how much are we spending, what are we getting, and how can we do it better?

So I will reject the arguments from those who say that the Republicans aren't doing the right thing. We are doing the heavy lifting. It is Republicans who are trying to look at the billions that are being spent. Not just the thousands, but the hundreds of millions and the thousand billions. Because a thousand billion is a trillion. And this is a big budget, and we need people to do what we are doing.

So, Mr. Speaker, I stand up for not just my party, the Republican Party, but I stand up for the honest and legitimate work that TOM PRICE and the Budget Committee have done. And I intend to follow up with this committee

and to make sure we know more about the real cost of government because it is the real cost of government that turns the direction of our country, where we pass by that effort of where we create good behavior and we help people to, one, where we create people who are leaning on the government for their life, for their lifestyle, and for their future. And that is a mistake. That is a mistake—and one that the Republican Party will try and stand up to.

I understand the difference between a person who is able-bodied and not. I have a son with Down Syndrome, and I understand that we do need to do the right things for people who can't take care of themselves—those with an intellectual or physical disability. I get it that we should be there for poor people.

But it is unconscionable if we are paying $5 million for an insurance plan, per person, under the Affordable Care Act. That is beyond the wild ideas of boondoggle. It is immoral.

So, the Republican Party is going to ask the tough questions. And when we go to the voter or taxpayer and we say: Here is what we want you to understand about your money, we can do it with the authority and the responsibility that we have done the homework. We sharpened our pencils and we made a real difference by understanding not just dollars and cents, but the future of this great Nation.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Now I think I understand it all. I believe I understand how you could lose $900 million when you are doing your budget.

By what possible means do you think that we are paying $5 million for each person's health care who is on the Affordable Care Act?

The rising cost of health care for the first time in 50 years is going down. But nobody ever paid $5 million for anybody's health care in a single year. It is the most atrocious thing I think I have heard on this floor.

Mr. and Mrs. America, these are the people you have entrusted your Congress to. They are the people who are writing your budget. They are the people who are going to voucherize your Medicare, who are going to turn Medicaid into a block grant and help some people, maybe not. These are the people making sure that the roads and bridges are crumbling and that are going to take food out of the mouths of the poor.

This is the kind of math that you are practicing over there? For heaven's sake.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), who I hope is as angry as I am, a member of the Committee on the Budget.

Ms. LEE. I want to thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for making it very plain in terms of what their budget does and does not do.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this rule and the underlying bill. Yes, I am a member of the Budget Committee and the Appropriations Committee, and I know that our national budget is a statement of our national priorities and our values. And I know very well that the Republican budget is full of misplaced priorities and it is not a moral document.

This budget should not be rigged in favor of special interests and the wealthy few, but the Republican budget is. Our Nation's budget should prioritize working families, too many of whom are making low wages and living below the poverty line. It should assist those working hard to find a job and invest in workforce training, job training, and job creation. Instead, this Republican budget keeps tax breaks for corporations and the superwealthy.

Our budget should open educational opportunities for all, but the Republican budget slashes Pell grants that Congress has already paid for by $89 billion.

□ 1300

A budget—a moral document—a budget that invests in the American people should invest in our Nation's crumbling infrastructure, but the Republican budget cuts funding for our roads, our bridges, and our rail.

It should contain a serious and effective strategy to end poverty if we really believe that our budget is a reflection of our values and is a moral document. The House Republican budget offers none of these.

In fact, it slashes programs that support low-wage workers and people working hard to find a job. These families shouldn't have to go hungry; yet, because their wages are so low, they need food stamps. By cutting $150 billion from SNAP, this budget creates more hunger and more poverty for people who are working.

Many of the programs in this budget are a legacy of the War on Poverty, which cut the poverty rate in our country by one-third in 50 years. Let me just read the list of programs that you are cutting and what the War on Poverty listed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM). The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. LEE. The Civil Rights Act, the Criminal Justice Act, Food Stamp Act, Older Americans Act, Social Security amendments, Voting Rights Act, HUD, all of these programs, Higher Education Act, these are initiatives that you are cutting that provide pathways out of poverty.

This Republican budget balances on the backs of the most vulnerable to preserve tax loopholes for the superwealthy and slush funds for Pentagon contractors.

I urge a ''no'' vote on the rule and on this budget.

List of War on Poverty Programs: the Civil Rights Act (1964); the Urban Mass Transportation Act (1964); the Criminal Justice Act (1964); the Food Stamp Act (1964); the Older Americans Act (1965); Social Security Amendments (1965); the Voting Rights Act (1965); the Housing and Urban Development Act (1965); the Public Works and Economic Development Act (1965); the Department of Housing and Urban Development Act (1965); the Amendment to the Immigration and Nationality Act (1965); the Higher Education Act (1965); the Child Nutrition Act (1966); the Child Protection Act (1966); and the National School Lunch Act (1968).

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 60 seconds just to ask the gentlewoman from California, I understand why she objects to the Republican budget. What I don't understand is why she objects to the rule.

We have made every single budget that any Member of Congress asked to be made in order, we made that in order. Could the gentlewoman tell me why she opposes the rule?

I will be happy to yield to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. LEE. Why do I oppose the rule?

I oppose the rule, first, because this rule, if it moves forward, would allow for the Republican budget, which we know could pass this body, with these huge cuts. I think we need to go back to the drawing board and minimally put back and restore cuts to the SNAP program.

Any budget that has SNAP cuts, cuts to Pell grants, does not invest in infrastructure, any budget that does that, regardless of the budgets that have been put forward, I don't want to see this debate put forward with those cuts in place.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank the gentlewoman.

Candidly, I am certainly on the other side of that issue. I understand that somebody is going to win and somebody is going to lose, but I think the process is always better when we allow everyone's ideas to come to the floor, and that is one of the things this rule does, and I am very grateful that we have been able to do that. I thank my friend.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE), a member of the Rules Committee, a member of the Budget Committee, and a member of the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding.

I want to pick up and thank my friend and thank our chairman of the Rules Committee for doing exactly what he just suggested, bringing us a rule that lets everybody bring their choices to the floor. That is what we all like to do around here.

Interestingly enough, we essentially have three Democratic choices and three Republican choices, and we are going to have an opportunity for people to express a variety of opinions and arrive at a consensus in this body.

Now, obviously, as a Republican, I like all three Republican alternatives pretty well. I think my friend Mr.

WOODALL has always worked on the Republican Study Committee budget; it gets us to balance faster than anything else on this floor.

The reality is, if you look at the three Republican budgets, they have several things in common. The first is they make tough choices because we have got an $18 trillion debt; and, just left on autopilot, that will increase by another $7.2 trillion. It aims to bring these things into balance, and each one of those Republican budgets does that—the Republican Study Committee budget a little bit faster—but all within the 10-year budget window.

Second, they all repeal ObamaCare—not a big surprise. No Republican voted for it. We have never liked it, and it would be remiss of us not to continue to argue our position.

Third, they all call for major tax reforms. We all know that lowering rates, eliminating exemptions, and rationalizing the Tax Code contributes to economic growth.

They all, frankly, defend the country pretty well. We do it in different ways, and we have debates, but they all manage to do that, and none of them raise taxes in the process of achieving those objectives.

I am pretty content with the Republican choices in front of us and look forward to that. I think it behooves us all to remember—and it gets lost in this debate—a budget is not the law of the land.

The budget is, essentially, a negotiating position. The President submitted a budget earlier. That is his initial negotiating position. Whatever emerges from this debate today is likely to be the Republican initial negotiating position.

My friends on their side will present a budget today which I presume represents their initial negotiating position. They have also got other budgets within the context of that—perfectly appropriate. We do, too, but they will have a general position. Our friends in the Senate, on both sides of the aisle, are wrestling with this very issue as we talk.

Now, we seem to forget, as we draw our differences and distinctions here, we do live in an era of divided government; and despite what many people think, we do occasionally come to compromises around here.

Now, I am pretty pleased we have lowered the budget deficit every year that we have been in the majority, but that has entailed some compromises. We compromised in the Ryan-Murray agreement. That was actually a pretty good agreement that both sides were happy with.

Frankly, this week, we will probably compromise on the so-called doc fix, the SGR. We compromised last December on the CR/Omnibus bill which, again, gave us some fiscal stability.

I suspect, as we all define our initial negotiating positions, at some point down the road, we will indeed compromise. The President of the United States has got a signature that is going to have to happen to any appropriations bill. Our friends have a filibuster control in the upper House.

My hope is we state our positions. I am very content with where we are opening this debate; and then, frankly, over the course of the months ahead, we work together and see if we can find that common ground.

That common ground ought to do what the Republicans are trying to do in terms of lowering the deficit, reforming entitlements, not raising taxes, and moving us in a fiscally responsible direction while we modernize our Tax Code. That is our opening position. I look forward to defending it.

I thank my friend Mr. WOODALL for bringing this excellent rule to the floor, which allows everybody to put forward their position.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of the rule.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), a member of the Committee on Rules and an extraordinary colleague.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, the last 8 years have been very difficult. We are recovering from the single greatest economic crisis since the Great Depression. This recovery hasn't been easy, and it has forced us to make difficult decisions. Working on budget priorities and wrestling with spending cuts have been difficult, to say the least.

Our economy is beginning to turn around, thanks in large part to an increase in hiring and the success of the Affordable Care Act; yet we still must wrestle with the Nation's budget. It is true, as my Republican friends say, that tough choices have to be made.

Why is it that every time House Republicans try to put our fiscal house in order, they ask those among us who can least afford it to make the most sacrifices?

Mr. Speaker, we should not balance the budget on the backs of the poor and working families. They didn't cause the financial crisis, and they shouldn't be the ones forced to get us out of this mess.

There is a lot to dislike in the Republican budget, from repealing the Affordable Care Act to ending Medicare as we know it, to slashing Pell grants. Quite frankly, it is awful.

I want to focus on what the Republican budget does to SNAP, the Nation's premier antihunger program. Once again, the Republican budget would turn SNAP into a block grant, resulting in sharp cuts of $125 billion. On top of that, the Republican budget requires a cut of at least another $1 billion—maybe more—from SNAP.

Mr. Speaker, SNAP is one of the only remaining basic protections for the poor. For many of the poorest Americans, SNAP is the only form of income assistance that they receive. The numbers don't lie, but the stories are far more powerful.

Just listen to the people who rely on SNAP to make ends meet. Thousands of people sent messages to Congress written on paper plates, pleading with us not to cut SNAP.

One woman wrote:

> SNAP means that, as a single mother, I was able to finish college, feed my family, and find a career where I am able to advocate for a program that I know works.

Another person wrote:

> SNAP means dignity. SNAP matters to me because no senior should have to choose between buying food or paying for their medication. When I was a child, my father left, and the only reason we could afford food was because of food stamps. I never got a chance to say thank you, so thank you.

For the life of me, I can't figure out why House Republicans are hell-bent on arbitrarily cutting a program that feeds hungry kids, seniors, and working families. These SNAP cuts are deep and hurtful. We have already seen how the farm bill cuts $8.6 billion, how those cuts are wreaking havoc among the hungry. Imagine what a cut of $125 billion-plus would do.

Republicans claim that SNAP spending is out of control; yet the Congressional Budget Office shows that SNAP spending is going down as the economy recovers and people go back to work.

Last night, in the Rules Committee, I offered an amendment to strike these SNAP cuts from the Republican budget. The Republicans blocked my amendment while, at the same time, increasing spending for the Pentagon by over $90 billion, without even paying for it.

Mr. Speaker, budgets are moral documents; and what the Republicans are doing, in my opinion, is immoral. Penalizing working families—and, yes, the majority of people on SNAP who can work do work—penalizing these families by taking away food in the guise of fiscal prudence is just wrong. Cutting SNAP, while increasing unchecked spending for the Pentagon, is hypocritical.

Let's be clear. There is a cost to hunger in America. Hungry kids don't learn in school. Senior citizens who take their medication on an empty stomach end up in the emergency room. Workers who miss meals are less productive at work.

Cutting SNAP, a program that puts food on the table for hungry families, is just a rotten thing to do. Shame on anybody in this House who votes for a budget that increases hunger in America.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to say to my friend from Massachusetts I know he cares deeply about these issues; and, candidly, this House is a better House because of his leadership on these issues.

Just this year, we are going to spend four times more on interest on our national debt than feeding families through the Food Stamp program. An unbalanced budget is eroding those opportunities to invest in people.

I am certain that we would come together to invest in Americans. I am

certain that we care. I will concede the gentleman cares. I won't concede he cares more than I do about lifting folks up and taking them to the next rung of that ladder.

Our debt and our deficit are eroding those opportunities to come together.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WOODALL. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I would argue that the problem of hunger in America is actually increasing our deficit and our debt; but I would also argue, if you want to find ways to balance the budget, maybe go after some of those corporate tax breaks, instead of going after poor people.

Mr. WOODALL. As the gentleman knows—and, again, I thank the gentleman—I have introduced the only bill in Congress that abolishes every single corporate tax break in the Tax Code. I would welcome support and enthusiastic cosponsorship from any of my colleagues on the other side the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to allow for consideration of legislation that would help families afford college tuition by letting undergraduate borrowers refinance their student loans at a low interest rate of 3.86 percent. That is what the families we represent need, not the education cuts in the Republican budget.

To discuss our proposal, I am pleased to yield 3½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY).

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York.

I rise in opposition to the rule and to the previous question, as she just stated, would allow consideration of H.R. 1434, the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act.

Mr. Speaker, there is an emergency out there for young Americans who are trapped in high interest rate students loans. The Federal Reserve bank has tallied that. It is $1.3 trillion of overhang in the U.S. economy.

None other than the former Republican Governor of the State of Indiana and the former Budget Director under George Bush testified before the Education Committee the other day, and this is what he said:

> Research from the Pew Research Center and Rutgers shows that today's 20- and 30-year olds are delaying marriage, delaying childbearing, both unhelpful trends from an economic and social standpoint.
>
> Between 25 percent and 40 percent of borrowers report postponing homes, cars, and other major purchases. Half say that their student loans increase their risk of defaulting on other bills.

□ 1315

There are 7.5 million young Americans who are behind on their student loans. Again, they are trapped in no collateral, high interest rate documents that our bill allows them to write down.

Anyone watching this debate knows that when there is a period of low interest rates—and that is exactly what is the situation today—middle class families refinance their houses, refinance their car loans, and refinance their credit cards; but students and people carrying student loan debt because of the fact that they were no-collateral loans are trapped.

Our bill allows them to go to the Department of Education, write down those interest rates to 3.6 percent. The Congressional Budget Office has told us that half of the trillion-dollar overhang would be refinanced down if this bill took place. That puts money in people's pockets, as the Pew Research Center shows. That means that they are going to go out and buy cars, buy homes, and start families.

Our failure to deal with this issue is strangling this economic recovery. And incredibly, we are going to take up a Republican budget which cuts Pell Grants and also raises interest rate costs for Stafford loan programs.

Let's be very clear: this budget allows the government to charge interest while people are in school, which has been a pillar of the Stafford student loan program, that interest is not charged while kids are going through college. Yet the Republican budget adds to that $1.3 trillion in overhang by adding interest costs in their budget plan.

The hard-working American people who want to buy homes, who want to send their kids to college, have an opportunity with this legislation, H.R. 1434, to allow them to refinance down their interest rates to a lower out-of-pocket cost that will provide an automatic, instant stimulus to the U.S. economy. That is what the American people are looking for, not a Republican budget plan that compounds the largest area of consumer debt in the U.S. economy. It adds costs to folks whose Pell grants won't rise and whose interest rates are going to go up on their Stafford loans.

The choice is very clear with this vote that we are about to take. One vote is going to add to the student loan problem, which the Federal Reserve has identified as the largest consumer debt challenge of our Nation, and the other vote will allow us to move forward to solving that problem.

Vote ''no'' on the rule. Vote ''no'' on the previous question. Let's help those 7.5 million kids and young people who are behind on their student loans. Allow them to refinance down their interest rates, which is what happens all throughout the U.S. economy during a time of low interest rates.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise in opposition to the rule, and I rise in opposition to the previous question so that H.R. 1434 can be offered. Let me tell you why.

Every few weeks, I spend time calling constituents who have sent me letters and emails. In many of these conversations, I hear about the burden of student loan debt. Just recently, I spoke with a couple with more than $100,000 in student debt, and their monthly loan payments exceed the rent that they pay on their apartment.

There is absolutely no question, student loan debt is an enormous problem in this country. We all know the facts. As the gentleman from Connecticut stated, at $1.3 trillion, student loan debt has surpassed credit card debt. Nearly three-quarters of college seniors graduate with some debt; bachelor's degree recipients graduate with an average of almost $30,000 in debt.

The Federal Government, the States, colleges and universities and other relevant actors in higher education must come together to address this issue. We must take steps to reduce the underlying costs of degree completion, strengthen Federal and State investment in colleges and universities, provide additional aid to students, and diminish existing student loan debt.

The gentleman from Connecticut, Mr. COURTNEY's legislation, the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, would help bring down existing student loan debt by allowing eligible borrowers with existing debt to refinance their student loans and receive the same lower interest rates passed by Congress in 2013 that new borrowers currently receive.

Lowering interest rates for existing loan debt will benefit tens of millions of Americans. I oppose the rule. I oppose the previous question.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

If I could engage my friend from California, I understand why he doesn't like one of the Republican budgets that is here. But this rule also makes in order every single Democratic substitute budget that was offered.

I would ask my friend why it is that he opposes this rule since it allows everyone's ideas to be considered.

I am happy to yield to my friend.

Mr. TAKANO. Well, I am not so much in opposition to the rule because of not allowing other budgets to be considered, but because of the way the rule is structured, I would rather see us be able to consider H.R. 1434. If we would oppose the rule and oppose the previous question, we could solve the student debt question here.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank my friend.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER).

Mr. DESAULNIER. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the previous question so that we can amend the rule

to bring up the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act.

The magnitude of the problem cannot be overlooked. In 2013, there were 37 million American student loan borrowers with outstanding student loans. Those 37 million American students hold an enormous $1.3 trillion in student loan debt, as my friend from Connecticut mentioned. Student loan debt is growing by $3,000 per second. The Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act would be a good first step in allowing students to refinance their loans and put some much-needed money back in their pockets and back in the American economy.

In 2012, Congress passed a bill to allow new student loan borrowers to receive a low interest rate. Unfortunately, students with existing student loan debt were left out of this fix. This bill would provide those students who borrowed before 2012 the same opportunities that new borrowers have.

If student loan borrowers could get lower interest rates, they would be able to more fully participate in the economy. They could buy houses, eat out in restaurants, move out of their parents' homes, or even just have enough money to save for a better future.

This bill is simple, and it fixes a fundamental inequity. I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the Democratic whip.

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

Mr. HOYER. I thank the ranking member.

Mr. Speaker, in parliamentary parlance, what we have before us is termed a ''structured rule.'' However, I would venture to say that this is an unstructured rule. It is a rule put forward by a majority with no clear structure to its strategy of how to govern this country.

This rule will allow them to bring two versions of their budget to the floor, as their deficit hawks and defense hawks continue to fight over what budget they should pursue. It is demonstrative of the deep divisions that we have seen displayed on a regular basis in the majority party.

We have now seen one example after another of this Republican majority being unable to assemble the votes from within its own ranks to pass important measures on its own. We saw it with funding to keep the Department of Homeland Security open. We also saw it last Congress, when Republicans were forced to withdraw an appropriations bill for Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development when they didn't have the votes to support their sequestration strategy.

The gentleman from Kentucky, HAL ROGERS, the Republican chairman of the Appropriations Committee, said at that time that the bill's removal meant that ''with this action, the House has declined to proceed on the implementation of the very budget it adopted just 3 months ago. Thus, I believe,'' Chairman ROGERS went on, ''that the House has made its choice: sequestration—and its unrealistic and ill-conceived discretionary cuts—must be brought to an end.''

That was the Republican chairman of the Appropriations Committee speaking—not STENY HOYER, not a Democrat, but a Republican leader.

So, Mr. Speaker, today is not the first time that we are seeing the majority plagued by dysfunction as it budgets in a partisan way, but today it has gone a step further with a rule that essentially acknowledges that there is no consensus among Republicans as to how they ought to proceed. That is why Republicans are putting forward this convoluted amendment strategy.

However, I tell my friends on the other side, the votes exist to pass a budget in this House but only if it is one that replaces both the defense and nondefense components of the sequester with a commonsense and fiscally responsible alternative.

And I predict today that this budget will not be followed, as previous budgets passed by the Republican majority have never been followed and were not followed by them.

Democrats would partner, I would tell my Republican friends, to pass a budget that invests in the future and does not stifle the growth of jobs and opportunity.

I urge my colleagues we can do better. Reject this rule. Let's go back to the drawing board. Let's get it right.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to say to my friend, whose leadership in this House I value, that he had an opportunity in that joint select committee, that supercommittee, an opportunity that I know he wishes that we had been able to come together on and we were not able to come together on.

What we have now is not a division amongst ourselves; it is a reflection of the fact that we actually have different opinions. Allowing different budgets to come to the floor is going to allow us to flush out those opinions.

I wish, thinking about bipartisan cooperation as we have had in years past, there would have been a Republican-Democratic substitute that would have gotten to balance as well, making those tough decisions. But instead, what we are left with are Democratic budgets that never balance and Republican budgets that achieve balance, all while ignoring the challenge that we have to deal with sequester long term.

I appreciate the gentleman's leadership on trying to deal with the sequester. I, too, wish we had had it.

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman from Georgia yield?

Mr. WOODALL. I am happy to yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. I thank my friend for yielding.

The fact of the matter is, I oppose this rule. I think my Republican friends' budget will pass. I understand that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WOODALL. I yield myself an additional 15 seconds, and I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman.

I wish he would go back to the drawing board. And I will tell my friend, I will participate with you.

Nobody believes, I think, that sequester is going to ultimately rule the day in our appropriation bills because it is, as your chairman said, ill-conceived and unrealistic. I would think it better policy for us to decide that now, and then implement appropriation bills consistent with something that is reasonable and not ill-conceived.

Mr. WOODALL. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS).

Ms. ADAMS. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today as a member of the Higher Education Subcommittee and as a retired professor of 40 years at Bennett College in North Carolina. I am steadfastly committed to making sure that every student has access to a quality, affordable college education because education is key to achieving the American Dream.

However, too many of our graduates are burdened with insurmountable debt, which hinders their prospect of achieving the great American Dream. Even worse, the rising cost of education and the threat of educational debt has become a barrier for many students considering college. That is not acceptable.

National student loan debt is more than $1.3 trillion. It is time to invest in our constituents and help our graduates better manage their debt. Homeowners and car owners can refinance their loans. Why can't our hardworking graduates do the same?

The Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act will allow them to do just that. It will allow graduates to refinance their old debt so that they are better equipped to pay it off.

One in seven student borrowers defaults on their loans within the first 3 years. If we don't act now, our graduates will continue to be forced to choose between paying school debt, purchasing homes, creating a savings account, and starting families. The threat is too grave to our economy.

I know firsthand what higher education can do for a person's life because of what it did for me. That is why I am fighting for every student to have access to a quality, affordable education.

We can no longer sit back and watch students spend their entire adult lives paying off their student debt. I urge my colleagues to put our graduates before partisan politics, and let's pass this legislation.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I would say to my friend from New York that I have no further requests for time, and I would ask my friend if she has further requests for time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I do not, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. WOODALL. With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1330

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, the House majority has once again chosen to favor billionaires over the middle class, debunk economics over real investments, and politics over people. Democrats have a clear alternative that would keep our economy growing and ensure a strong fiscal future. Our alternative ensures that college is achievable, that jobs are available, and that health care is affordable. That is what will keep our economy on the right track.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD along with extraneous material immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question, vote ''no'' on the draconian Republican budget, and I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I understand why folks want to vote ''no'' sometimes in this Chamber. You want to vote ''no'' because you don't like the ideas the other side has, and it turns out that if they have more votes than you have on any particular idea, they win and you lose. I lose in this Chamber from time to time myself, as I know all my friends do, but this rule offers an opportunity at least for every idea to be heard, and the best ideas ought to rise to the top. That is the America that I believe in. That is the Congress that I believe in, that if we allow this festival of democracy, if we allow all of these provisions to be considered, we will have the best ideas rise to the top.

When I hear my colleagues complaining about what isn't available today, it is an indictment of our collective work ethic because this rule makes every idea that was presented available.

Mr. Speaker, my friends on the other side decided to talk about student loan debt today. It is a troubling issue. Member after Member has come to the House floor, and they have said that these students have taken out all of these loans, economic circumstances have changed, and now their opportunities are truncated. I feel for those students. America is in exactly that same circumstance. We have taken out loan after loan after loan, economic circumstances are changing, and if we continue on this path, America's opportunities will be truncated.

I hear my friends advocating for an opportunity to refinance student loans. Where is the opportunity to refinance America's $18 trillion in debt? Mr. Speaker, over the next 10 years, if we do nothing—if we do nothing—as my colleagues propose, if we defeat this rule and do nothing, America will pay $4.7 trillion in interest alone—not a penny of the $18 trillion in principal, $4.7 trillion in interest alone. That is an entire year, in fact, that is an entire year and one quarter of Federal spending wasted on interest.

These are not academic conversations we are having today, Mr. Speaker. These are decisions about whether we are going to be paying our creditors or investing in America. These are decisions about whether we are going to be paying our creditors or focusing on our collective priorities. These are decisions about whether the budget will balance or whether it never ever, ever will.

I choose balance, Mr. Speaker. I choose balance, and I choose the tough bipartisan decisions that we will have to make together. I choose the tough bicameral decisions we will have to make together. I choose the tough negotiations with the President that we will have to do together. But I will not be a party to mortgaging the future of America one more time. I am grateful that we will consider all of the ideas that are presented here today, and I am confident that balance and fiscal responsibility will rise to the top.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this rule and get on to this great debate that we will have.

The material previously referred to by Ms. SLAUGHTER is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 163 OFFERED BY MS. SLAUGHTER OF NEW YORK

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1434) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for the refinancing of certain Federal student loans, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 1434.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee

on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adopting the resolution, if ordered; suspending the rules and passing H.R. 216; and agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 238, nays 180, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 132]

YEAS—238

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—180

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—14

Brown (FL)
Buchanan
Costa
Duncan (SC)
Gosar
Graves (MO)
Grijalva
Hinojosa
Labrador
Norcross
Payne
Roskam
Ruiz
Smith (WA)

□ 1402

Mr. PALLONE, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, and Mr. GARAMENDI changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 237, nays 180, answered ''present'' 1, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 133]

YEAS—237

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buck
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed

Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—180

Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Griffith

NOT VOTING—14

Adams
Brown (FL)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Deutch
Duncan (SC)
Graves (MO)
Grijalva
Hinojosa
Norcross
Payne
Ruiz
Smith (WA)
Turner

□ 1410

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS BUDGET PLANNING REFORM ACT OF 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 216) to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a Future-Years Veterans Program and a quadrennial veterans review, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a Chief Strategy Officer, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 420, nays 0, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 134]

YEAS—420

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brownley (CA)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schock
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—12

Brown (FL)
Buchanan
Coffman
Duncan (SC)
Graves (MO)
Grijalva
Hinojosa
Norcross
Payne
Perry
Ruiz
Smith (WA)