

FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, FISCAL YEAR 2012

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a joint resolution (H.J. Res. 94) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes, and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

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

Mr. DICKS. Reserving the right to object, and I will not object, I yield to the distinguished chairman to explain this CR.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

This continuing resolution extends funding for government operations by 1 day to give the other body an extra day to consider and pass the consolidated appropriations bill.

Mr. DICKS. I withdraw my reservation.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 94

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112-36) is further amended by striking the date specified in section 106(3) and inserting "December 17, 2011".*

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, FISCAL YEAR 2012

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a joint resolution (H.J. Res. 95) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes, and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

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

Mr. DICKS. Reserving the right to object, I yield to the chairman to explain the amendment.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

This continuing resolution ensures that government operations will continue to be funded through December 23. The resolution is a simple date extension that gives Congress time to prepare the consolidated appropriations bill for presentation to the President. This is a noncontroversial measure that has signoff from both sides of the aisle, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. DICKS. I withdraw my reservation and urge a positive vote.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 95

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112-36) is further amended by striking the date specified in section 106(3) and inserting "December 23, 2011".*

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY,  
DECEMBER 19, 2011

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. on Monday next.

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

There was no objection.

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO  
INSERT EXTRANEOUS MATERIAL

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) be authorized to insert extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER  
AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 3589

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 3589.

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

There was no objection.

HONORING BOULDER COUNTY

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

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the 150th anniversary of Boulder County, Colorado.

Boulder County is one of 17 Colorado counties officially created in 1861 by the Territory Assembly.

In the mid-1800s, settlers began flocking to Boulder County because of the robust and profitable mining sector. Local businesses were created to support the growing number of new miners to the area.

The original founders of Boulder had more aspirations than to just be a simple Colorado mining town. Residents

pushed strongly in the Territorial Assembly to have the State university located in the region.

In 1877, 1 year after Colorado was admitted to the United States, the University of Colorado—the State's first university—opened its doors. From its early status as a college town and mining community, Boulder County has expanded, with a population now reaching over 300,000 people. The picturesque scenery and outdoor lifestyle has allowed this county to grow significantly over the past 150 years.

Aside from the University of Colorado, Boulder County boasts an excellent technology sector, numerous small businesses, and countless microbreweries. One of my personal favorites is Oskar Blues Brewing Company in Longmont, Colorado. This region of Colorado continues to rate high in national polls for overall health and well-being, and is rated as one of the best places to raise a family in the country.

Boulder County is the gateway to the Rocky Mountains. It's known for its tremendous outdoor recreation. From skiing, hiking, fishing, hunting, and biking—just to name a few—Boulder is an outdoorsman's town. It is my honor to recognize the 150th anniversary of Boulder County on the House floor.

□ 1410

ANTI-AMERICAN ACTIVITY

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

Mr. RIVERA. Mr. Speaker, it was recently discovered that a Venezuelan national prone to anti-American activity is present and active on U.S. soil.

Livia Antonieta Acosta Noguera, consulate general of Venezuela in Miami, has been linked to a potential cyberattack on the United States involving affiliates of the Iranian, Cuban, and Venezuelan regimes. In 2008, while serving at the Venezuelan Embassy in Mexico, Ms. Noguera worked with members from the Iranian and Cuban Embassies to develop plans for an attack on critical U.S. Government infrastructure systems.

Ms. Noguera's actions demonstrate her willingness to undermine U.S. interests by partnering with Iran and Cuba, two U.S.-designated state sponsors of terrorism. This discovery heightens our concern for the growing Iranian presence in the hemisphere. The Obama administration should take decisive action against Iran in order to prevent the development of any sort of Latin American-Iranian diplomatic relations.

This is an essential component of the preservation of our national security; and, if the allegations are found true, it begins with the immediate diplomatic expulsion of Ms. Noguera.

FUNDING FOR DISASTERS AND  
HONORING OUR RETURNING SOL-  
DIERS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we just finished debating and reviewing, although the time was very short, the language that would fund this Nation. That is our duty.

I'm concerned, however, that some of the cuts impacted our seniors, our young people, and our environment. We must do better, and I certainly disagree with cutting again the appropriations for this Nation impacting our veterans and their families another 2 percent.

I voted against it, and I believe that we must ensure that if America is hit by a disaster, we pay for it. We have to fight this fight again.

However, Mr. Speaker, as our soldiers return, I thank Members who are wearing the yellow ribbon, but I ask you to go home and yellow ribbon your district offices. Ask your cities and hamlets and States to put yellow ribbons out to welcome the troops who are coming home and say a job well done.

It ended yesterday with the casing of the colors in Iraq. It is our obligation and duty to not let one soldier come home to a silent America and a silent community.

HONORING CHRISTOPHER  
HITCHENS

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I awoke this morning to unfortunate news. A friend of mine and one of the world's most brilliant writers and intellectuals, Christopher Hitchens, passed away yesterday.

Christopher Hitchens was a brilliant man who was a writer and a provocateur. You may not have disagreed with him, you may not have agreed with him, but I think everybody knew that Christopher Hitchens was well-versed on the subject on which he spoke and could express it in a way unlike any other. I don't think there was a more erudite, knowledgeable individual on the face of this Earth.

He has left us.

To me, he was a good friend. He made my visit to Washington here easier. To his friends, he was loyal, gracious, and fun. To his foes, he was a feared enemy, a feared foe.

The world was lucky for his being here, and I was lucky for my life intersecting with his. The world shall miss him, a life well lived.

Rest in peace, my friend.

END OF WAR IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BROOKS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the

gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday marked the official end of America's 9-year war in Iraq. In a low-key ceremony in Baghdad, U.S. troops lowered the American flag of command that flew over the Iraqi capital. The 4,000 remaining U.S. servicemembers in Iraq will leave by this year's end.

The Iraq war was a painful and difficult time, extraordinarily costly in terms of Americans, America's lives and resources. Nearly 4,500 Americans, including 45 Nebraskans, were killed in Operation Iraqi Freedom. 227 Nebraskans were wounded in combat. Tens of thousands of Iraqis lost their lives. We lost good men and women, individuals full of life and blessed with talent, whose proud families awaited their return to the country they loved so dear and served so well.

But in spite of our wounds, we are proud—proud of our fallen heroes, proud of the veterans who have come back to us, proud of their sacrifice, proud of their noble vision that has significantly changed the global environment where democratic ideals are now making steady gains everywhere.

The work of our troops, steadily done in the midst of extensive public debate and strategy deliberations about the war was the strength of this mission. These troops achieved what was set before them. The victories were theirs. Their unwavering commitment, their skill, and their bravery got the job done.

The troops' efforts unbound an Iraqi people held hostage for decades by an egomaniacal dictator. Insurgencies led by terrorists seeking to wreak havoc and disorder were put down by our troops. Space was created to allow Iraqis the time necessary to build the foundations of a representative government in a more open society.

But there are still challenges and significant obstacles. It would have been preferable, Mr. Speaker, for a small stay-behind force to remain for ongoing response and stabilization efforts.

The way forward will not be easy, but today Iraqis determine Iraq's future. No longer constricted by the dictates of a despot, they have held elections, they have written a constitution, and hopefully they will build a culture that respects the rights and dignity of all of their people.

America and the world needs a stabilized Iraq. Our security is strengthened by it, and we will continue a strong, diplomatic relationship to help achieve it. An Iraq that protects the rights of all of its people, Sunni and Shiite, Christian and Yazidi, and employs a government that maintains order and preserves liberties will be an Iraq that can help transform the entire Middle East looking for a new way forward.

The foundation for this has been laid, after much toil and bloodshed, by valiant American soldiers who return to us now as modern-day heroes.

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

□ 1420

FAIRTAX

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) is recognized for the remainder of the time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the time.

I want to get to tax policy here in just a moment, but I want to take just a few minutes, having just passed the appropriations bill for fiscal year 2012, to talk about how long that's been.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know you have been a proponent of regular order since you came to this body. But as I went back and looked to see when was the last time the House was able to operate not under a continuing resolution but under a regular appropriations process, Mr. Speaker, it's been since December of 2009. December of 2009 is when we last passed an appropriations bill.

Now granted appropriations bills come in all sorts and sizes. The one we're dealing with today came in the large size. We'll call that the jumbo size. I know the minority whip shares my passion for that. My hope is we will be able to get to regular order next year and go through each appropriations bill one by one by one.

But what I say to you, Mr. Speaker, is that I came to this body a year ago to make a difference, and I wanted to make all the difference last January, I'll be honest with you. And when I couldn't do it all in January, I hoped that we could do it all in February. When we couldn't do it all in February, I hoped we could do it all in March. And, of course, we were able to pass the budget here in the House, the budget that took the first step towards reforming entitlements that we've seen come out of this body since I would argue Lyndon Johnson began these programs in the 1960s. But we have begun to make a difference.

As I look at this stack of papers here that represent the spending, the appropriations process, for 2012, Mr. Speaker, it's the first time in 2 years we've had that. Of course, over a thousand days since the Senate has been able to pass a budget. We have made progress. As 2011 comes to a close, I hope we can celebrate some of those successes along the way.

Because in terms of real spending, Mr. Speaker, in this document what we see is for the second year in a row, the first time since World War II, two consecutive years, Mr. Speaker, with this leadership team and this appropriations committee and this bipartisan House, we've been able to reduce Federal discretionary spending—\$95 billion.

A lot of folks say, well, ROB, is that going to be funny math? Is that going to be just some items but not all