

throughout our Nation and supporting the Deferment for Active Cancer Treatment Act.

#### DON'T DISMANTLE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the ACA and all it has done to protect the health of our country's young people.

As we gather today, everyone seems to be analyzing yesterday's elections results. Other folks have taken a deep dive to analyze whether or not Russia elected our President. And as all of this is happening, the Senate has been meeting in secrecy to dismantle the Affordable Care Act that, for millions of young people and millions of young Americans, has been a lifesaver. Since its enactment, the ACA has cut uninsured rates for Americans age 18 to 34 by more than 40 percent.

Guided by political expediency instead of principle, my Republican colleagues are jamming this bill through an approval process without hearings or input from healthcare professionals and with no regard to millions of Americans whose lives will be affected by it. This is a shocking breach of our constituents' trust.

The ACA lifted a heavy burden off the shoulders of millions of Americans, and now is not the time to kick these individuals to the curb. We are better than that, America.

#### COMMEMORATING AMERICAN EAGLE DAY

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I am proud once again to rise and join in commemorating June 20, 2017, as American Eagle Day and to celebrate the recovery and restoration of the bald eagle, the national symbol of the United States.

On June 20, 1782, the eagle was designated as the national symbol of the U.S. by the Founding Fathers at the Second Continental Congress. The bald eagle is the central image of the Great Seal of the United States and is displayed in the official seal of many branches and departments of the Federal Government.

The bald eagle is an inspiring symbol of freedom and the democracy of the United States. Since the founding of the Nation, the image, meaning, and symbolism of the eagle have played a significant role in art, music, history, commerce, literature, architecture, and culture of the United States.

The bald eagle's habitat exists only in North America. I hope my colleagues will join me in celebrating June 20, 2017, as American Eagle Day, which marks the recovery and restoration of the bald eagle.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1873, ELECTRICITY RELIABILITY AND FOREST PROTECTION ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1654, WATER SUPPLY PERMITTING COORDINATION ACT

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 392 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

##### H. RES. 392

*Resolved*, That at any time after 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 bill (H.R. 1873) to amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to enhance the reliability of the electricity grid and reduce the threat of wildfires to and from electric transmission and distribution facilities on Federal lands by facilitating vegetation management on such lands. 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 Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part A of 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, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments 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. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. 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.

SEC. 2. At any time after 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 bill (H.R. 1654) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to coordinate Federal and State permitting processes related to the construction of new surface water storage projects on lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior and the

Secretary of Agriculture and to designate the Bureau of Reclamation as the lead agency for permit processing, 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 Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of 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, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments 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. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. 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.

□ 1230

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), 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.

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEWHOUSE. 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 Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, before I begin the rule on the two measures that are before us today, let me just make a couple of comments that have come to mind in light of the events over the last week.

Mr. Speaker, you may know that this is the first formal debate that we have had as a legislative body since last Wednesday morning's shooting. I think

it is appropriate that we take a minute to reflect and remember those who were injured and are still struggling to recover from their injuries as well as those who did not receive physical injuries on last Wednesday morning but who are still recovering.

Let me also say, if I could be so presumptuous, Mr. Speaker, I believe that perhaps some people in the United States look to us here in Congress—their Representatives—and look and see how we act towards one another and how we conduct ourselves in our interaction with each other. Let me just say that if we are disrespectful to each other, others may see that and think that it is okay; that if Congress can be that way to themselves, maybe we can act that way, too. They may not even realize that. It may be just a subconscious thing.

I ask how can we expect others to have a high opinion of us if we don't even show each other the respect that we should and that we deserve?

I believe that we must all remember that we are—before we are Republicans, before we are Democrats or Independents—all Americans. We are all here trying to do what is right, what is right for our country, certainly what is right for our constituents, and we shouldn't say that someone is not here for those purposes.

I don't know your district, Mr. Speaker, and I might say that you don't know mine. So let's argue, which is what we are here for. As ugly as sometimes it can be, that is our job, to debate on the merits of ideas. But it is not our job to win a debate by degrading the ones who are making the arguments against. I think we all have this obligation to win debates or to argue debates on the merits of the issue. Last Wednesday reminded me that it is up to us, if we want changes, to make them and to begin them here in this body.

I was heartened in our meeting as a Congress in the auditorium over at the Capitol Visitor Center that there were several Members asking for a change in tone—a change in tone in how we interact with each other. It is important that we act civilly, that we be polite, and that we be respectful—kind of like how we treat each other on the journey over here from our offices in the elevators and in the hallways.

I would assert that this is also something that is the responsibility of our President, our country's leader, someone who can set the tone for our country, someone who can describe our hopes and our dreams and help us aspire to reach those things. It is also the responsibility of our media and for those advocacy groups that we all have and that we all work with. It is up to our parties. I think it is up to every single American.

We need to rediscover the faith that we should have in each other, our respect for each other and those bonds that make us one nation under God.

Now, it is simple to state, but how do we accomplish this?

It can start right here on this floor. Say something positive. We all call each other lady and gentleman. We all start off that way, and then sometimes the gloves come off.

I can assert to you that not every idea that is presented here is all good or all bad.

What is the risk of acknowledging a good part of a larger idea even if you may disagree with that larger idea?

I believe we have some very articulate people in this body who can figure out quite easily how we can accomplish that.

We shouldn't impugn the motives of others. We don't assign blame. We don't get personal. In fact, if you look in the rules that were adopted by this Congress, in section 363 of Jefferson's Manual of Parliamentary Practice, it says: "The consequences of a measure may be reprobated in strong terms; but to arraign the motives of those who propose to advocate it is a personality, and against order."

So it says in no uncertain terms that we should not make this personal. We can object without being objectionable, and maybe—just maybe—others will see this and discover a tone that we need and a change in America. I believe that we can start this right here, today, with our very first debate right now.

Will we agree on everything?

Absolutely not. In fact, this is where our disagreements should show the most. We are duty-bound to shape legislation by pointing out weaknesses but also by accentuating strengths. Mr. Speaker, every debate, every speech on the floor or in committee, our interactions with the media, in townhalls, or press releases, we are being listened to and being watched. I hope that we can change our tone and begin to change the tone in the United States of America.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to announce that, on Tuesday, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule, House Resolution 392, providing for consideration of two important bills: H.R. 1873, which is the Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection Act; and H.R. 1654, the Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act.

This combined rule provides for consideration of H.R. 1873 under a structured rule, making three amendments in order, all of which were submitted by Democratic Members of our Chamber. H.R. 1654 will also be considered under a structured rule, with one Democratic and one Republican amendment made in order.

H.R. 1873 will help ensure reliable electric service and reduced wildfire hazards, which can result from inadequate vegetation management near power line rights-of-way on Federally owned and operated lands.

Mr. Speaker, over the past several decades there have been numerous electricity outages as well as incidents of wildfires due to contact between power lines and trees on Federal lands.

In 1996, my home State of Washington was impacted when three power lines in the Pacific Northwest sagged onto overgrown trees, leading to a massive electricity blackout that impacted 7.5 million people across 14 Western States, two Canadian provinces, and even parts of Mexico. Then, in August of 2003, an outage left 50 million electricity customers without power when a falling tree came into contact with transmission lines.

These are not isolated incidents. According to the U.S. Forest Service, in 2012 and 2013, contact between power lines and trees on Forest Service lands led to the outbreak of 113 and 232 wildfires, respectively. This legislation would reduce such wildfires in part by promoting Federal consistency, accountability, and timely decision-making to protect electricity transmission, grid reliability, and distribution lines on Federal lands from overgrown and under-maintained trees and vegetation.

H.R. 1873 will cut red tape to create a streamlined and consistent process for removing hazardous trees and vegetation without wasting time and money before they cause a wildfire or an outage. Preventing forest fires and maintaining a reliable electrical grid for our communities is an obvious priority for all of us here in Congress, which is why I was pleased to see this bill pass through the House Natural Resources Committee with bipartisan support.

I have seen countless catastrophic wildfires devastate Western communities just in the past several years, which is why this issue must be addressed and resolved. However, due to existing regulations, it is extremely difficult for utility companies to remove hazardous vegetation or trees that have the potential of falling on these power lines.

The scope of this problem is evident when considering the U.S. Forest Service manages 155 national forests and 20 national grasslands—encompassing over 192 million acres—that include 2,700 authorized electric transmission and distribution facilities.

□ 1245

Similarly, the Bureau of Land Management administers 245 million acres, including over 71,000 miles of electrical transmission and distribution lines on its Federal lands.

In order to perform infrastructure inspections and operate and maintain power lines on these lands, electric utilities must seek permission and approval from the appropriate Federal land management agency, which typically use processes under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 to assess whether the proposed vegetative management measures comply with Federal environmental laws.

This often leads to delays and cumbersome bureaucratic requirements, which often prevent utilities from carrying out important vegetative management activities on a consistent and

timely basis. Yet the costs of operating, maintaining, and repairing these electric lines on Federal lands fall to the utility companies and their customers, which can lead to higher electricity costs for ratepayers.

Mr. Speaker, the rule also provides for consideration of H.R. 1654, the Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act. This legislation will streamline the permitting process for new surface water storage projects, which is critically important for many Western and rural communities that have endured severe droughts in recent years.

Currently, the regulatory process for constructing new surface water storage projects often involves applying for a host of Federal, State, and local permits, as well as approvals from various agencies, which can be a very cumbersome, costly, and time-consuming undertaking.

Additionally, conflicting permit requirements and agency reviews can add time to the project, the planning, and implementation process while also increasing the potential for last-minute surprises that could endanger the success of a project or require significant additional work.

In order to address this problem, H.R. 1654 creates what is seen as a one-stop-shop permitting process to expedite construction of both new and expanded non-Federal surface water storage projects. The measure establishes the Bureau of Reclamation as the lead agency for purposes of coordinating all reviews, analyses, permits, licenses, or other Federal approvals as required by law, which will streamline the current multiagency permitting process and eliminate unnecessary delays for job-creating construction projects that directly benefit local communities and economies.

As the lead agency, Reclamation will be required to coordinate and prepare the unified environmental documentation that will serve as the basis for Federal decisions authorizing the use of Federal lands, as well as to coordinate project development and the construction of qualifying projects.

Additionally, H.R. 1654 will allow the Secretary of the Interior to expedite the evaluation of permits for qualifying projects through the use of funds contributed by a non-Federal public entity.

Mr. Speaker, the rule we consider here today provides for the consideration of two bills that will have positive and lasting impacts for the American people, ratepayers, rural communities, and many Western States, as well as our entire country's economy.

H.R. 1654 will provide the type of coordination and streamlining that is essential to the development and construction of much-needed water storage projects, certainly benefiting my home State of Washington, as well as water-stricken communities across the country.

H.R. 1873 will create a framework for vegetation management near trans-

mission and distribution lines on Federal lands while also providing electric companies with much-needed clarity and defined authority to remove hazardous trees that pose a risk of falling into power lines. Managing this vegetation is a critical component in ensuring the safety and reliability of the electrical grid, which will benefit all of our constituents.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to support this rule as well as the underlying legislation.

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

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

First, I want to rise in agreement with my friend from Washington's statement about civility in this Chamber and beyond. I think that, while it is extremely important that those of us who are elected to represent 700,000 to 800,000 people reflect the passions that we bring to our service, at the same time, we need to make sure that nothing that we say in these walls or outside is used to incite those who hear those words in a different way than they are intended.

That is the fine line that we walk as elected Representatives who are passionate about our ideals and our values, and it is one that I encourage the President to walk, as well as other opinion leaders who we often see on the cable talk shows hurling inciteful phrases back and forth that could be used to further incite the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the two underlying bills: H.R. 1873, the Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection Act; and H.R. 1654, the Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act.

Frankly, both of these bills are trying to address real problems that have bipartisan solutions that I support, but neither of these bills solve the problems in a thoughtful, effective way without creating collateral damage that, in many ways, is as damaging as the problem that they are designed to solve.

The majority will claim that similar bills received hearings last Congress, but I want to point out from a procedural perspective that neither of these bills have had hearings. These bills have not gone through the committee process. But what they won't say is there are dozens of new Members of Congress. New members of the Natural Resources Committee didn't have hearings at all, but it was rushed through a markup in committee and to the floor without any hearings in this session, without the new members of the National Resources Committee having a chance to ask questions about these bills.

There is a reason we have regular order. It is so that we elected Representatives can use the passion we bring to service to ask the difficult

questions to find out how to get at these very real problems that we are trying to solve.

Unfortunately, this secrecy, lack of hearings, and lack of participation appears to be the norm, and, in fact, the standard that Republicans are setting in both Chambers of Congress right now. It is how the Republicans handled the healthcare bill in the House. It is how the Republicans are handling the secret healthcare bill behind a closed door somewhere over in the Senate.

We know some things about the Republican healthcare bill. We know it will increase healthcare costs, throw people off their insurance, reduce access for the American people. We know it will burden small businesses and the middle class. We know it will hand hundreds of billions of dollars in tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans. But there is also a lot we don't know because the process has been closed. This type of secret backroom deal is, unfortunately, becoming the norm of the way Republicans are running their agenda in Washington.

The rule for this bill is another example. It blocked at least three amendments from being considered on the floor.

Why can't we discuss the ideas of all Members, especially since there was no hearing on this bill?

Representative MCEACHIN from Virginia, Representative SCHNEIDER from Illinois, and Representative TORRES from California all offered amendments, all had good ideas and were not even allowed to discuss those on the floor for 10 minutes, 5 minutes, not even for 1 minute, to offer or discuss any of those amendments.

If my colleagues on the Republican side don't think they are good ideas, let's at least have a vote. They can vote against them. If they defeat them, that is the process. But they are not even allowing a vote on these amendments.

Unfortunately, the process of this bill is typical of the Republican process on healthcare and the way they have approached so many other issues. Republicans are working in secret and limiting debates so the American people won't see the horrible things they are trying to do, like throwing tens of millions of Americans off of healthcare.

Now, getting to these bills.

First, the Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection Act has the goal of preventing forest fires and disruptions to power distribution; something that I strongly agree with.

I represent a district that has over 60 percent public land and a number of rural power districts. It is an admirable goal. We are a district that is at risk for forest fires. We had several devastating fires in the last several years alone. In fact, I am representing a State that is getting even more ravaged by fire, in light of the changing climate.

We need to take action to prevent them and allow additional work with

regard to preventing the forest fire risk. Unfortunately, this bill is not a positive step, but I am glad to say there is an alternative out there.

Representative CRAMER from North Dakota and I, along with five of my Colorado delegation colleagues, recently introduced bipartisan legislation that will decrease these types of fires and protect power lines and transformers the right way—a way that Democrats and Republicans can agree on; a way that we can probably run the bill as a suspension and get 410 votes; a way that the stakeholders are involved and utilities, fire prevention experts and firefighters, environmentalists all agree on.

My legislation, known as the National Forest System Vegetation Management Pilot Program Act of 2017, gives power and electricity companies the ability to remove dead trees, but without the recklessness included in the bill that we are considering today.

It is a stark contrast. We can actually solve this problem in a way that would bring the country together, or there can be a divisive bill—maybe against one Democrat, maybe against five; I don't know, but it is not a broadly bipartisan bill. It is not one that has the support of the communities that are most affected by forest fires in my district. It is not even a bill that has the support of our main utility company in Colorado that actually sought the ability to reduce forest fire risks, which is done by Representative CRAMER's and my bill.

This bill we are considering today simply lacks the protections that we need to have confidence. In this bill, the company can come up with a plan to remove vegetation, and then it can be accepted with no questions asked. They can't require them to fix obvious problems, like the power company cutting down trees for no reason other than to sell it for timber. They can't even deny an application.

Frankly, I think this legislation's real goal is to take a small step toward turning management of public lands over to private industry.

Once this plan that they would submit under this bill is approved—because the plans have to be approved—the utility companies would be able to do massive devegetation and clearing work without any reason related to fires and without any risk of liability.

On the other hand, the bipartisan legislation I introduced with Mr. CRAMER gives that liability waiver that the utility companies need to do the additional work, but only if there is no gross negligence by the utility company and has something to do with actually reducing the risk of fires, as well as putting reasonable limits on the distance that the work can be done from the power lines or transformers themselves.

Mr. CRAMER's and my bill has some of the most conservative and some of the most liberal Members of this body as cosponsors. So I just wonder and I ask

the majority leader why we aren't bringing that bill to the floor—a bill that lacks controversy, that helps prevent forest fires, that saves American people time and money, a bill that this body could be proud of advancing with, if not all, almost near unanimity.

I would suggest that, instead of bringing the bill we are considering today to the floor, we should have been focused on fixing something that we know needs to be fixed: the Forest Service's problem with fire borrowing.

Fire borrowing means the Forest Service has to spend all their money fighting fires and little money to reduce the risk of forest fires, deal with climate change, or clear the extensive backlog of maintenance. We can do that today by bringing to the floor the bipartisan Wildfire Disaster Funding Act that Representative SIMPSON and I introduced, along with my colleague, Mr. SCHRADER.

These are the types of commonsense measures that would actually reduce the risk of forest fires, put the right parameters around utility companies doing additional work, and free up additional resources to prevent forest fires from occurring, rather than simply doing the cleanup after they occur.

H.R. 1654, the Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act, also is an admirable and needed goal, one that there is potential for bipartisan cooperation to speed up the process of approval of water projects and hydro dams.

There truly is a problem with the speed of which some of these problems are approved. I represent a district and a State where we understand how difficult and important water is, and we also believe in the new renewable energy economy.

Unfortunately, this bill also does it the wrong way. It circumvents and undermines important input from experts and scientists that actually understand the reviews that are being made by the Clean Water Act. It even circumvents tribal sovereignty in the Native American Tribes and their sacred lands by overriding their input.

That is why a wide spectrum of organizations are opposed, from conservation groups like Oceana and League of Conservation Voters to sportsmen's groups like Trout Unlimited and The Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations. Dozens are opposed to this reckless bill.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter of opposition.

JULY 20, 2017.

PLEASE OPPOSE H.R. 1654

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to urge you to oppose H.R. 1654 (McClintock, R-CA), a bill that would significantly limit meaningful public and environmental review of new dams and other surface storage projects throughout the west. H.R. 1654 would likely reduce protections for fish and wildlife, and could lead to further damming and destruction of western waterways. Similar provisions were included in H.R. 2898 and H.R. 23—anti-environmental bills from 2015 and 2017, respectively—and the Department of Interior

has previously expressed opposition to these efforts.

H.R. 1654 would undermine existing laws by making the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation ("Reclamation") the lead agency for all environmental reviews, including reviews under the Endangered Species Act. Giving Reclamation this unprecedented power over project permitting could undermine the ability of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and N.O.A.A. Fisheries to share expertise and inform the development of major infrastructure investments, placing imperiled fish species at risk. H.R. 1654 also establishes strict project-review timelines, including provisions that could require expedited review under the National Environmental Policy Act. These fast-tracking provisions could make it difficult for responsible agencies to meaningfully analyze proposed projects, and could limit the public's ability to weigh in on infrastructure that could affect communities for decades. Further, the bill permits non-federal public entities to contribute funds to expedite project permitting, raising questions about the fairness of the federal review process.

This damaging bill would affect states throughout the west, and could even impact how state agencies are able review proposed projects within their jurisdictions. H.R. 1654 allows states to subject state agencies to the bill's procedures, thereby requiring those agencies to cede control to Reclamation and comply with Reclamation's timelines. Consolidating project review in this manner could weaken the essential role that states play in reviewing water infrastructure projects within their jurisdictions.

As we recently learned from the emergency at Oroville Dam in California, careful planning and design for major infrastructure projects is critical for ensuring public safety and protecting the environment. Environmental review of surface storage projects is also essential for protecting endangered and commercially important salmon runs and the thousands of jobs that depend on healthy salmon populations. With so much at stake, the streamlining provisions in H.R. 1654 are unwise and irresponsible. Instead of fast tracking dam projects in the West, we should be investing in fiscally sound, environmentally friendly water supply solutions like conservation, water use efficiency, wastewater recycling, and stormwater capture.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to vote no on H.R. 1654.

Sincerely,

American Rivers  
Audubon California  
California Trout  
Cascadia Wildlands  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Clean Water Action  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Earthjustice  
Endangered Species Coalition  
Environmental Protection Information Center  
Friends of the Earth  
Friends of the River  
Grand Canyon Trust  
Klamath Forest Alliance  
League of Conservation Voters  
Living With Wolves  
Native Plant Conservation Campaign  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Oceana  
Sierra Club  
The Bay Institute  
Western Environmental Law Center  
Western Watersheds Project  
WildEarth Guardians  
Wilderness Workshop  
Wildlands Network.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, the letter is signed by a number of sportsmen and environmental organizations, the very groups that we should seek to work with, the very groups that actually support, as I do, hydropower, facilitated permitting of hydropower, the right way.

We need to speed up the process. In Colorado, we have had water projects that have been waiting on a decision for far too long.

□ 1300

But instead of going around experts, rolling over tribal sovereignty, why don't we fund the agencies doing the reviews so that they have the manpower and time to look at an application, give feedback, and make a decision quickly?

Again and again we have underfunded the Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA, not acknowledging that that is what is causing and contributing to this very slowdown.

We can solve these issues that we are facing. We can expedite permitting for water projects and hydropower. We can allow utilities to do additional work to reduce the risk of forest fires.

I call upon this body, please, let's do it in a way that brings Democrats and Republicans together, proudly gets a bill to President Trump's desk in a fast and effective way involving input from Democrats and Republicans, not just Republicans.

Mr. DOGGETT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. POLIS. I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I would just ask the gentleman a couple questions to underline a couple of the really important points you made about the context in which this bill is considered, because while I think every Democrat agrees with our colleague from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) about the importance of civility and the importance of us each taking responsibility for the tone here and certainly condemning violence, condemning anyone who would suggest that if you come to the rally and you protest that you ought to be beaten up by the people that are there, the kind of thing that happened, unfortunately, last year, that we should condemn all of that. Does the gentleman agree that the House exercising vigorous oversight of the Administration when it breaks its promises, when it mixes personal business with public business, that this remains an important aspect of our job and no way suggests a breach of civility?

Mr. POLIS. Absolutely. I agree with the gentleman from Texas. This House and the institution of Congress, as a separate agency of government in Article I, section 1 of our Constitution has the responsibility to exercise oversight of the executive branch.

Mr. DOGGETT. If the gentleman would further yield, I heard a rather bizarre comment last week in the after-

math of these shootings suggesting that, in the aftermath of them, Democrats would be reaching out to Republicans on healthcare, and I couldn't quite understand how that could occur. Indeed, your comments about this particular set of bills and the healthcare bill, isn't it a part of civility that we have respect for one another and don't try to force through a bill with an all-night, unnecessary session, not force through here a bill that Republican Members say they didn't have time to read but then leave it up there on the Speaker's desk for a month before even sending it to the Senate? And if you have a legislative process where the majority leader in the Senate says he won't even guarantee 10 hours to see a huge bill that affects this much of the economy and the lives and the livelihoods of millions of Americans, that that in itself is a breach of the respect and the civility that we need to have in this Congress?

Mr. POLIS. It absolutely is.

Sometimes the American people in the back-and-forth say: Hey, why aren't Democrats participating in the healthcare debate? And the reason, as the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) articulated, is we have never been invited into this room.

I would ask the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT): Have you seen the Republican healthcare bill in the Senate?

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. DOGGETT. No. I served on the Ways and Means Committee. We could not see the Republican House bill until hours before it came up.

Mr. POLIS. Isn't that too short a period of time to even come up with a thoughtful amendment?

Mr. DOGGETT. It was under police guard downstairs so that even Republicans, like Senator RAND PAUL, couldn't get in and see the bill.

Then we have an all-night session without a single member of the Trump Administration coming to respond to questions about it, while every healthcare professional group that I have heard of opposed the bill, not letting any of those people come to a hearing. I just suggest that this is a breach of civility. That is a breach of respect. It is a breach of the democratic process which we are all about. That needs to be on the table and is as important as whether someone uses strong language here in the House.

Mr. POLIS. I have one more question on that.

I am a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee, one of the three committees that had original jurisdiction over the Affordable Care Act. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) is a member of the Ways and Means Committee, one of the two committees with jurisdiction under the budget reconciliation for this healthcare bill. I want to ask: Have you ever been invited by President Trump to discuss your ideas for healthcare reform?

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. DOGGETT. No. I think he has only wanted to listen to one side, and I don't begin to think that even the Republican Members of this House can contain President Trump. They seem to have sealed their lips about it, and I wish they would speak out more.

But I think they can effect the processes in this House, and when they pass a bill that President Trump says is "mean, mean, mean," they need to go back and look at that process. And I see the same thing happening, from what you have told us, about the two bills that are up here.

Why is it that we have a process that is designed to exclude almost half of the people in this House, to exclude their amendments, to give them no opportunity to be heard at a markup, to bring in no witnesses to defend the bill or to allow discussion of that bill? That is not only not civil, not the democratic process, but it leads to worse public policy.

Even if they have a majority to pass it, their ideas need to be tested, and it allows them to perfect their legislation. That is the way the democratic process is supposed to work. But with all the secrecy, all the forced action, the tight timetables that are applying here, they thwart our democratic process in a way that hurts all sides and certainly impairs civility.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) and would just add, look, fire prevention, expediting water projects and hydropower, these are not partisan issues; and to prove that point, there are bipartisan bills sponsored by conservative Republicans and liberal Democrats that would solve these issues. Rather than moving either of those bills through the floor, they are moving a divisive ideological bill with unintended consequences—or, perhaps, intended consequences—that would devastate a lot of our natural resources that sportsmen and recreationists rely on for our quality of life in the mountain West and across the country.

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, the beauty of having a diverse membership in this body is that we have people from all over the country who live and breathe the issues that are before us. We are privileged today to have the young lady from Wilson, Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY) here to speak on these bills. I appreciate her offering to help in these arguments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY), my young colleague.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank very much my colleague from Washington particularly for calling me "young." I appreciate that always.

Mr. Speaker, I have enjoyed listening to the colloquy taking place among my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. We see this repeatedly now day

in and day out as we work hard in the majority to continue the progress that we have made so far in this Congress, really record-breaking progress of passing legislation, putting bills on the President's desk, having those bills signed into law. Mr. Speaker, I believe we are now at the point where we have presented more bills to the President and had more bills signed than in any Congress in the first term of any Presidency since Harry Truman. It is a record we are very proud of over here.

It is clear that as we continue to put commonsense reform legislation forward that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle would sometimes like to distract and talk about other things. In terms of the healthcare conversation that is going on and the talk of unintended consequences, I would just point out, Mr. Speaker, that we now know the consequences of ObamaCare. We have had to live under ObamaCare now for many years. We are in a situation where the system is absolutely failing the people of this country, and we have an obligation as a body, an obligation we take seriously here in the House, to make sure that we do what is right for the people of this country, that we provide them relief, that we provide them the kind of healthcare reform that is going to lower their costs, that is going to provide better access to care and put people back in charge.

We have tried the Democrats' way now for the last 7 years and fundamentally seen that the government cannot mandate effectively what people need. It doesn't have the consequences that many on the other side of the aisle thought it would, and the consequences have been devastating.

Mr. Speaker, the same is true in terms of the challenge that we are here dealing with today with these two bills. As my colleague from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) so eloquently put it, those of us across the West—and Mr. POLIS knows this well, too—have had to live under this situation of absolutely devastating forest fires, forest fires that have been caused in too many instances by mismanagement by the Forest Service, mismanagement by the Federal Government.

These bills—and in particular, H.R. 1873, which is a bill that I am honored to cosponsor with Representative LAMALFA—will begin to impose the kind of commonsense reforms that we need so that our power grid is no longer threatened by mismanagement of our Federal Forest Service, of our Federal forestlands.

On our federally managed forest in Wyoming, when we have overgrowth around a power line, it is a direct risk to the people, the property, and the power grid, as well as to the wildlife that those on the other side of the aisle claim to care so much about.

Our local leaders understand this. Our local leaders are in the very best position to do something about this and to do it quickly. That is why we put in place these provisions in these

bills that will allow the local utilities, allow local officials, to make the kinds of decisions that have to be made quickly.

H.R. 1873 will allow our utilities to submit their own management facility inspection plans, their own operation and maintenance plans, and it will also ensure that our Federal land managers have consistent and accountable policies to reduce hazards in electricity rights-of-way, including they, themselves, will be held accountable for managing the land. The bill does adjust the liability framework for these rights-of-way to ensure that the utilities and the Federal Government have the incentive to respond quickly and effectively to these hazards.

Nobody in Wyoming or in any other State ought to feel that they have to go without affordable, reliable power, ought to feel that the power grid is threatened simply because the Federal Government fails to do its job. We have simply seen that too much. Our local co-ops are willing and able to step up to the plate.

Solving this problem is crucial to those who live in Wyoming, where bark beetle-killed trees and poorly managed overgrowth of Federal forests pose true threats to the safety and health of our communities and to our power reliability. Mr. Speaker, that is why H.R. 1873 is supported by the Wyoming Rural Electric Association, the Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Black Hills Energy, the Edison Electric Institute, the American Public Power Association, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Western Governors Association, and many others who care so much about our lands out West.

Wyoming supports this bill. Wyoming utility co-ops know best how to manage the provision of electricity and how to handle these rights-of-way and also how to provide healthy and sustainable forest management as they do so.

Mr. Speaker, I request immediate passage of this bill. It is hugely important that we get back on track, that we stop the kind of mismanagement from Washington that has been so damaging for so many years, and I urge my colleagues in Congress to act quickly on its passage.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, President Trump campaigned on a promise to bring, somehow, jobs back home. He said he was going to overhaul the Tax Code, introduce an infrastructure package, and remove barriers to job creation. Unfortunately, we have yet to hear specifics on any of the administration's plans to accomplish that.

My colleagues will be happy to hear that in my hand I have an amendment that will help to accomplish this goal by providing tax incentives to companies that bring overseas jobs back home. What a great idea.

Mr. Speaker, when we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amend-

ment to the rule to bring up Representative PASCRELL's Bring Jobs Home Act, H.R. 685. This bill closes a tax loophole that actually rewards companies for moving jobs overseas while providing a tax credit to companies that move jobs back home to our country, the United States of America.

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 (Mr. SIMPSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) to discuss our proposal.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule.

Here we are again. We are debating a bill to roll back regulations that protect the public, if I am not mistaken, Mr. Speaker. I think we are a little bit tone deaf.

Here is a news flash: The whole country is focused on defending blue-collar jobs, bolstering our industrial manufacturing base. Americans broadly agree that keeping United States jobs from moving overseas is a top priority. Yet despite campaign promises, the administration has awarded government contracts to companies that continue to offshore.

□ 1315

You can't make this up. So we say one thing and then we do another. Now, look, both parties do it. Neither party is privy to virtue. But let me tell you something, there is a plethora of these before us on saying one thing when you are campaigning and not following through. That is not good.

The flow of jobs overseas is not stopping. Just this week, it was announced that Ford is canceling plans to build the Ford Focus in Mexico, ending North American production entirely and making the model almost completely in China beginning next year, as soon as its output ends at a plant in Michigan.

Yet, right now, when companies move overseas, as the gentleman from Colorado just said, we actually give them a reward. We give them a tax break for the cost of moving. Do you think that is going to impede or help people deciding whether they should stay or go? A tax break for leaving. The average citizen never gets that kind of a break. I mean, that is the law. I am not making it up. I will stand corrected, if need be, Mr. Speaker.

We need to stop offshoring these jobs. And this Congress should start by defeating the previous question and bringing up the Bring Jobs Home Act.

Around 5 million U.S. manufacturing jobs have been lost since 1994. Just ask folks in places like Ohio and Pennsylvania who have seen steel mills and rubber factories shipped overseas.

Come to my hometown of Paterson, New Jersey, formerly the hub of the textile manufacturing industry.

My bill eliminates this tax deduction to those companies and those corporations who want to bring their jobs overseas, and it gives a tax credit of up to 20 percent of the cost to U.S. businesses that bring jobs back to the United States of America. The companies would have to add jobs to claim the tax benefit.

So let's stop subsidizing companies that ship jobs overseas and start bringing jobs back to our shores.

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, it doesn't get much simpler than that.

This is not a new idea. President Obama and Democrats in Congress have raised this bill for years, and the Republican Congress has blocked our bill at every turn. Senator STABENOW of Michigan leads this bill in the Senate, where it cleared a procedural vote 93-7 in 2014.

I challenge you, today, to take up and pass this bill to stand up for American manufacturing and the workers here at home. Talk only goes so far. Let's act.

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, isn't it good to hear good news? I just got this on my electronic device here.

The MedStar: "Congressman Steve Scalise continues to make good progress. He is now listed in fair condition and is beginning an extended period of healing and rehabilitation."

Isn't that good news?

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, let me just say that it is good news that our brother from Louisiana is in fair condition. I appreciate that news report.

And I also want to take up the previous speaker's offer to work with us on tax reform. We look forward to his assistance in moving that issue forward.

I might say that he is mistaken. The bill that we are talking about today is about protecting public interests. The last time I checked, people who I know like green trees, not black ones; they like their electricity to be there when they turn their light switch on; and they like water. These are three issues that we are looking to protect and make sure that people in the United States can enjoy all of these attributes.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK) to talk about exactly that.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE), my colleague on the Rules Committee, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, in the West, water is life. Coloradans must wisely steward

the precious water flowing through our lands. That is why we are so focused on water storage projects.

Unfortunately, many water storage projects in my State face significant setbacks in permitting due to a long list of regulatory checkboxes. Local, State, and Federal agencies all have their own requirements.

For the past several years, I have followed multiple important water storage projects on the front range of Colorado that deeply impact Coloradans. Year after year, the shovels remain untouched as the water projects inched their way through the regulatory permitting process. Water projects should not take over 10 years to permit and then only a few years to build.

Much of this delay occurs because each level of government—local, State, and Federal—requires their own studies and permitting checklists, even though many of those requirements are the same or only slightly different.

H.R. 1654 makes this process more efficient, allowing the Bureau of Reclamation to coordinate the Federal and State permitting processes, so that we can avoid unnecessary duplication and so that we can better unify the approval requirements.

H.R. 1654 offers a more streamlined approval process for our water projects but still empowers State and Federal governments to fulfill our duties to protect communities and the environment.

This is a good government bill. We are simply asking different levels of government to work together so that our water projects can earn the permits they rightfully qualify for.

No water project should take 10 years to gain approval, but too many have. H.R. 1654 ensures that projects on Federal lands will have a clear, more efficient permit application process.

We owe this bill to the people of Colorado; we owe this bill to the people of the West. We owe this bill to everyone in this country who relies on fresh, clean drinking water. We owe it to the farmers who need water for their crops, to the ranchers who need water for their livestock, to the anglers who need water for their recreation.

I am supporting H.R. 1654 for these people. I ask my colleagues to support this important legislation as well.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK), my friend, that there is a problem here we are trying to solve. Unfortunately, these are not the bipartisan bills that Democrats and Republicans from both sides of the aisle have worked hard to put together to do.

Of course, Democrats, myself, and so many others want to expedite water projects permitting for hydro renewable energy projects. Of course, we want to free up utilities to do extra mitigation work around power lines to reduce the risk of fires. We have solid bipartisan bills that would do that. We

could put them on the floor today or tomorrow, and they would have over 400 votes. There are liberal Democrats, conservative Republicans, and firefighters who support them. Utilities, Democrats, Republicans, and sportsmen support them.

That is a route we could go. We could get those bills to President Trump's desk by next week and actually start preventing forest fires and facilitate the permitting process around hydro projects. But, no, instead, we are doing a very divisive bill, one that has a lot of problems that it creates, in addition to solving some of the problems that it sets out to address.

I encourage my Republican friends—they are in charge; they control the agenda—to take a look at pragmatic, smart, and thoughtful ways to reduce forest fire risk, speed up water project approval, such as the bipartisan National Forest System Vegetation Management Pilot Program Act, which is a bipartisan bill.

Look, this bill around the expedited water projects would circumvent a lot of the public input process that is actually so important to the success of these projects. My colleague from Colorado was referring to several water projects. One that we both care deeply about, the Northern Integrated Supply Project, NISP, is currently with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation.

I strongly supported extending the public comment period from 30 to 60 days—a very reasonable time to allow people more input, which actually changed how the project was done and planned. It was a very meaningful form of input to build additional public support for the project; and, when the project is completed, will lead to a better, more meaningful project, serving the water needs of our communities, as well as the impact on the lives of those who live in and near it.

So, look, whether it is fixing fire borrowing, giving utilities a liability waiver while not giving them a free pass, making sure that our agencies doing water project reviews have the men and women power they need to actually get them done quickly, these are reasonable, good ideas that I think we could pass with unanimity, or near unanimity.

I promise the Republicans, if you would just work with us and have an open process, we could find common ground. Let's start with these small things. Let's start with preventing forest fires around electrical fires. We will get to healthcare. We can find common ground with you on that, too.

But let's start on finding common ground around reducing forest fire risk around electrical wires, Mr. Speaker. There is a path to do that. Let's solve our small problems, and let's build a pathway to work together on the big problems our country faces.

I urge everyone to vote "no" on this restrictive rule, this rule that goes to the floor with no hearing, this rule

that rules out Democratic amendments, doesn't even allow discussion of them, and has a controversial piece of underlying legislation, when there is no need for controversy around such an important aspect of life in the American West, and, nationally, reducing forest fire risk and facilitating water projects and hydroelectric projects. Please join me in voting "no," so we can get this House back to working on commonsense legislation that is bipartisan, with the full support of the American people.

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

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

I appreciate the time of my colleagues, who have joined me on the floor today, to speak in support of these underlying bills, as well as for the hard work of the House Natural Resources Committee.

First of all, H.R. 1873 is a bipartisan bill by any measure—five Democratic cosponsors, passed bipartisanly through the committee.

This will reduce the threat of electricity outages caused by contact between overgrown trees and power lines. It is that simple.

Existing Federal regulations and red tape can make it extremely difficult for utilities to gain the access that they need to their rights of way in order to perform needed maintenance. Before taking this action, they must receive approval from Federal agencies. They have been criticized for not allowing these utilities to carry out vegetative management policies on a consistent and timely basis.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, just one down tree on a transmission line can have devastating impacts, causing blackouts for thousands or millions of homes as well as businesses, or it can ignite fires that consume entire forests. Yet it can take months to remove one single tree, due to our outdated Federal regulations and cumbersome bureaucracy.

H.R. 1654 streamlines the current multiagency permitting system, which creates significant delays for project construction and completion, by creating a one-stop shop, a permitting process at the Bureau of Reclamation.

Mr. Speaker, the Bureau was created to oversee water resource management in the West and to prevent water shortages by building dams and conveyance systems. Yet, over the past 40 years, Federal regulations and policies have slowly made it increasingly difficult to build dams and reservoirs throughout the Western United States. Presently, it is nearly impossible to even expand the storage capacity at existing facilities.

The Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act establishes a framework where the Federal agencies with jurisdiction over new surface water storage projects must work together, coordinate their schedules, share technical information and data, and publish their

findings publicly. This important measure will allow water providers to better manage their systems to modernize and enhance their water storage infrastructure and optimize water resource management in preparation for future droughts and shortages, which we know will come.

□ 1330

The Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection Act will prevent wildfires and power outages while enabling utilities to safely supply electricity to rural and Western communities.

H.R. 1873 will ensure that practical measures are taken to protect power lines and conserve our public lands, which is especially important in Western States where overgrown Federal forests are too often the norm rather than the exception.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the rule provides for consideration of two commonsense measures that will implement much needed improvements to the Federal management of our water resources, our Federal lands and forests, and electricity infrastructure. I urge my colleagues to support this rule as well as the underlying bills.

The material previously referred to by Mr. POLIS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 392 OFFERED BY  
MR. POLIS

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

SEC 3. 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. 685) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to encourage domestic insourcing and discourage foreign outsourcing. 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 Ways and Means. 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. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 685.

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. NEWHOUSE. 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.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

#### RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to a question of the privileges of the House and offer the resolution that was previously noticed, asking that it be read in full concerning President Trump's tax returns.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the President shall immediately disclose his tax return information to the House of Representatives and the American people.

Whereas, President Nixon explained that "People have got to know whether or not their President is a crook" when he invited the Joint Committee on Taxation to audit his returns after the Internal Revenue Service gave him an unwarranted tax discount;

Whereas, according to the Tax History Project, every President since Gerald Ford has disclosed his tax return information to the public;

Whereas, the Chairmen of the Committee on Ways and Means, Joint Committee on Taxation, and the Committee on Finance have the authority to request the President's tax returns under section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

Whereas, pursuant to Article I, section 7, clause 1 of the Constitution, often referred to as the Origination Clause, the House of Representatives has the sole authority to initiate legislation that raises revenue for the national government, and the Committee on Ways and Means is considering a comprehensive reform of the Tax Code;

Whereas, according to media reports analyzing President Trump's leaked 2005 tax return, we know that had his own tax plan been in place, he would have paid an estimated mere 3.48 percent rate instead of a 24 percent rate, saving him \$31.3 million;

Whereas, according to The New York Times, the President used a legally dubious tax maneuver in 1995 that could have allowed him to avoid paying any Federal taxes for 18 years;

Whereas, President Trump holds "interests as the sole or principal owner in approximately 500 separate entities," according to his attorneys, and the President's tax plan proposes to cut the tax rate on such "pass-through" entities from 39.6 percent to 15 percent;

Whereas, one analysis estimated that President Trump would personally save \$6.7 million from two tax breaks included in the Republicans' first tax cut, which they misleadingly call the American Health Care Act;

Whereas, without the President's tax returns, the American people cannot determine how much he will personally benefit from proposed changes to the Tax Code;

Whereas, an ABCNews/Washington Post poll found that 74 percent of Americans would like President Trump to disclose his tax returns and the most-signed petition on the White House website calls for the release of the President's tax return information to verify compliance with the Emoluments Clause, with more than 1,097,000 signatures as of date of this resolution;

Whereas, disclosure of the President's tax returns could help those investigating Rus-

sian influence in the 2016 election better understand the President's financial ties to the Russian Federation, Russian businesses, and Russian individuals;

Whereas, after breaking his pledge to make his tax returns available, President Trump instead presented a one-page letter from a law firm giving him a clean bill of health on any business dealings with Russians, but failed to note that the very same law firm boasted of the "prestigious honor" of being named "Russia Law Firm of the Year" for 2016;

Whereas, former Federal Bureau of Investigation Director James Comey, before he was fired by President Trump, publicly confirmed that the Bureau has been investigating potential ties between President Trump's campaign and Russia since July and that the Russian President Vladimir Putin favored a Trump electoral victory;

Whereas, President Trump's son-in-law and senior advisor, Jared Kushner, met during the Presidential transition at the behest of the Russian Ambassador with Sergey N. Gorkov, a graduate of a school run by the successor to the KGB and who was appointed by Vladimir Putin to head a Russian state-owned bank that is on the U.S. sanctions list;

Whereas, Mr. Kushner proposed establishing a secret back channel of communications directly to Vladimir Putin, even considering the use of Russian embassy facilities to do so;

Whereas, Attorney General Jeff Sessions falsely stated during his Senate confirmation hearing that he "did not have communications with the Russians," when in fact he met at least twice during the campaign with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak;

Whereas, former Director Comey testified before the Senate Intelligence Committee that President Trump had asked him in the Oval Office about "letting Flynn go," referring to the investigation into former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn's business ties to Russia;

Whereas, President Trump stated on May 11, 2017, that he had decided that he was going to fire Comey because of "this Russia thing";

Whereas, former Director Comey, on June 8, 2017, testified that Special Counsel Robert Mueller could investigate whether President Trump's actions with regard to Director Comey and the Flynn investigation constituted obstruction of justice;

Whereas, in 2013, President Trump said, "Well, I've done a lot of business with the Russians. They're smart and they're tough," and President Trump's son, Donald Trump, Jr., told a news outlet in 2008 that "Russians make up a pretty disproportionate cross-section of a lot of our assets";

Whereas, against the advice of ethics attorneys and the nonpartisan Office of Government Ethics, the President has refused to divest his ownership stake in his businesses;

Whereas, the Director of the nonpartisan Office of Government Ethics said that the President's plan to transfer his business holdings to a trust managed by family members is "meaningless" and "does not meet the standards that . . . every President in the past four decades has met";

Whereas, the Emoluments Clause was included in the Constitution for the express purpose of preventing Federal officials from accepting any "present, Emolument, Office, or Title . . . from any King, Prince, or foreign state";

Whereas, the Trump International Hotel in Washington, D.C., has hired a "director of diplomatic sales" to generate high-priced business among foreign leaders and diplomatic delegations;

Whereas, the Joint Committee on Taxation reviewed the tax returns of President Rich-

ard Nixon in 1974 and made the information public;

Whereas, the Committee on Ways and Means used the authority under section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 in 2014 to make public the confidential tax information of 51 taxpayers;

Whereas, the Committee on Ways and Means has now voted three times along party lines to continue to cover-up President Trump's tax returns;

Whereas, the House of Representatives has now refused nine times to act on President Trump's tax returns;

Whereas, the American people have the right to know whether or not their President is operating under conflicts of interest related to international affairs, tax reform, Government contracts, or otherwise;

Whereas, the House of Representatives undermines its dignity and the integrity of its proceedings by continuing the cover-up of President Trump's tax returns: Now, therefore, be it;

Resolved, That the House of Representatives shall—

1. Immediately request the tax return and return information of Donald J. Trump for tax years 2006 through 2015, as provided under section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as well as the tax return and return information with respect to the President's businesses of each business entity disclosed by Donald J. Trump on his Office of Government Ethics Form 278e, specifically each corporation and each partnership within the meaning of subchapter K of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 where he is listed as an officer, director, or equivalent, or exercises working control; and

2. Postpone consideration of tax reform legislation until the elected Representatives of the American people in this House have obtained President Trump's tax returns and return information to ascertain how any changes to the Tax Code might financially benefit the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from Texas wish to present argument on the parliamentary question whether the resolution presents a question of the privileges of the House?

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I do wish to address the parliamentary question and would appreciate the opportunity to speak at this time about it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized on the question of order.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, you can certainly observe, as all the Members can, the many troubling events that are reflected in the resolution we just had read and why they do arise to the privileges of the House.

Under clause 1 of rule IX, questions of the privileges of the House are: "those affecting the rights of the House collectively, its safety, dignity, and the integrity of its proceedings."

This resolution seeks to protect the integrity of the proceedings of the House, and I believe that it is therefore privileged. There is just not an issue that is more fundamental to the integrity of this House, the people's House, than the faith the American people have in our democracy.

That sacred faith is being undermined. It is under assault right now by President Trump. This House must act to protect the integrity of its proceedings.