

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

DeFazio

NOT VOTING—18

Berkley	Honda	Pastor
Bishop (UT)	John	Schakowsky
Capps	Kelly	Sessions
DeLauro	LaTourette	Sullivan
Diaz-Balart, L.	Marshall	Waters
Gephardt	Matsui	Wynn

□ 1604

So the motion to adjourn was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1793

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1793.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, on one of his secretaries.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2210, SCHOOL READINESS ACT OF 2003

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, by the direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 336 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 336

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2210) to reauthorize the Head Start Act to improve the school readiness of disadvantaged children, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce now printed in the bill, 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 printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that 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. Each amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the re-

port, 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. After a motion that the Committee rise has been rejected on a legislative day, the Chairman may entertain another such motion on that day only if offered by the chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce or the Majority Leader or a designee. After a motion to strike out the enacting words of the bill (as described in clause 9 of rule XVIII) has been rejected, the Chairman may not entertain another such motion during further consideration of the bill. 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 amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. 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.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purposes of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Res. 336 makes in order the bill H.R. 2210, under a structured rule. The rule provides 1 hour of debate to be equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

The rule provides that in lieu of the amendment recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment, the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in part A of the Committee on Rules report accompanying this resolution and provides that it shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in part B of the report.

It makes in order only those amendments printed in part B of the Committee on Rules report, which shall be considered 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 opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for a division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order are waived against the amendments printed in part B of the report.

Finally, the rule provides for one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, there are many things in this world that I can be content with, fully satisfied. Watching a beautiful sunset, eating a good piece of chocolate cake, or reading a great ending to a nail-biting suspense book. But there are other things in this world with which we should never be content; ideals which we should never tire of championing, that we should never stop striving for. And the quality of our children's education is one of those items with which we should never be content. We should always want more for them.

Mr. Speaker, the debate today is in many ways a vote on the status quo. Do we keep the existing system as it is, or do we demand more for our children? More specific to our debate: Are we completely satisfied that the quality of our children's education is fine, or do we demand more? The bill before us today, the School Readiness Act, strengthens the Head Start program, the Federal Government's largest effort to prepare the Nation's most disadvantaged children for school.

An immensely popular program, Head Start provides a range of services including education, nutrition, health, and parent training to over 20 million preschool children and their families who are living in poverty. But Head Start can do better.

The legislation before us aims to reform and improve Head Start so that disadvantaged children hold the same level of academic preparedness as all of their peers before entering kindergarten. Specifically, this plan aims to enhance school preparedness, improve teacher quality, and close the "readiness gap" that exists between Head Start and non-Head Start children.

First, this education package will help enhance each school's effectiveness by providing certain select States with more flexibility and control over the operation of prekindergarten initiatives through a measured pilot program. Currently, States lack the ability to fully coordinate their State's early childhood programs with Head Start. This inefficiency results in the duplication of programs and services, underenrollment, gaps in services, and missed opportunities. With this pilot program, however, States and local communities will be able to tailor their programs and services to best meet the needs of local families.

It is important to note that this pilot program in no way eliminates basic programs and services, nor is the program an unfunded mandate or a loophole for States to cut early childhood education programs. Let us be crystal clear: this bill in no way cuts funding for any of Head Start's education, nutrition, or health services. Quite the opposite, Mr. Speaker. This package provides safeguards to prohibit participating pilot program States from making funding cuts. In addition, the Head Start package authorizes a \$202 million increase in funding for the program, an amount that has nearly doubled in the past 7 years.

This legislation will also ensure that more Head Start teachers are adequately trained and educated in early childhood development, particularly in teaching the fundamental skills of language, prereading, and premathematics. These provisions will help to meet a goal set recently by the National Head Start Association itself, which calls for 75 percent of the Head Start teachers to have at least an associate degree by the year 2005 and for all Head Start teachers to have at least an associate degree by 2008.

And, finally, for our country's most, most disadvantaged children, this education plan will help close the Head Start readiness gap and ensure that all children achieve academic parity.

Most children entering Head Start hold academic skills far below national standards. That is very sad. And while most children make improvements in these schools while enrolled in Head Start, the average Head Start child still lacks many of the premathematics and preverbal skills that their peers attain.

Head Start students are learning, but they are not learning enough. In fact, for the brightest 25 percent of Head Start kids, there is no evidence of academic progress while enrolled in the program. This bill makes significant improvements to the program, fine-tuning its focus on a strong curriculum and academic excellence.

And so we find ourselves faced with the same questions I asked just moments ago: Is Head Start better and more effective than it was yesterday or last year?

□ 1615

It is a worthy question, especially when faced with the long list of studies that shows the sad truth, that Head Start children simply do not begin kindergarten with the same level of academic preparedness as their more fortunate peers.

So I ask the opponents of this legislation, are you satisfied with this readiness gap? Are you comfortable with the status quo? Well, I am not. Parents are not. And neither are the supporters of this bill.

The level and quality of our children's education is something with which we can never be completely content. It is an on-going struggle, an area where we must be willing to constantly demand more.

There is no rest when it comes to fighting for a better education and a brighter future for the youngest in our society. There is no such thing as a perfect classroom, a perfect teacher, or a perfect student. There is always room for improvement.

Mr. Speaker, this plan raises the bar on our standards and our expectations. It closes the readiness gap between disadvantaged and more affluent children, and it will enhance teacher quality and school effectiveness.

In short, Mr. Speaker, it is a bill that demands the best for our children, and

I urge my colleagues to pass the rule and agree to the underlying bill.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 will dismantle Head Start and rob single moms of the very best childhood education for their children.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The Chair would advise Members that as indicated by previous occupants of the Chair on June 26, 2003, on June 22, 2002, and on March 24, 1995, although a unanimous consent request to insert remarks in debate may comprise a simple, declarative statement of the Member's attitude toward the pending measure, it is improper for a Member to embellish such a request with other oratory, and it can become an imposition on the time of the Member who has yielded for that purpose.

The Chair will entertain as many requests to insert as may be necessary to accommodate Members, but the Chair also must ask Members to cooperate by confining such remarks to the proper form.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

(Ms. LOFGREN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 would cynically dismantle Head Start, so I rise in opposition to the bill.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD).

(Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 will dismantle the successful Head Start program.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. KILPATRICK).

(Ms. KILPATRICK asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 will dismantle Head Start, which in these desperate economic times should be strengthened and not weakened.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 will dismantle Head Start and rob single moms of the best early childhood education for their children.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak regarding H.R. 2210, because in these desperate economic times Head Start needs to be strengthened, not weakened.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS).

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 will dismantle Head Start, which in these desperate economic times should be strengthened and not dismantled.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ).

(Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 will dismantle Head Start and take thousands of beloved Head Start teachers from the children who depend on them.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SÁNCHEZ).

(Ms. LORETTA SÁNCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, as the only Member of Congress that is a former Head Start child, I rise to speak about H.R. 2210, which will dismantle Head Start and rob single moms of the best early childhood education for their children.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON).

(Ms. WATSON asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about how H.R. 2210 will dismantle Head Start and take thousands of beloved Head Start teachers from the children who depend on them so greatly.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 2210, the wrongheaded Republican Head Start Bill that represents an unprecedented attack on our federal preschool system.

I want to bring to your attention two important reports that were released this week by

the Government Reform Committee of which I sit on, one commissioned by members representing Los Angeles area, and one by the congressional Black Caucus. Both of which demonstrate that H.R. 2210 is detached from reality and does little to address the programs' existing challenges.

The reports released by the Government Reform Committee track the success of current Head Start program. They tracked studies that showed how Head Start children are more likely to receive medical services than other low-income children, and they are less likely to repeat a grade, require special education, or be convicted of a crime. Head Start children are also more likely to graduate from high school and college, and that the program narrows the performance gap between disadvantaged children and other children in vocabulary, writing skills, and social behavior.

So why is this Administration trying to dismantle a successful and popular 40-year old program? Studies after studies have showed that when states run their own pre-school programs, they fail to provide the services guaranteed under the comprehensive standards of Head Start. For example, 60 percent of the states do not require dental care referrals, while 40 percent of the states fail to provide mental health referrals.

Under H.R. 2210's proposal to block grant Head Start in eight states, hundreds of children would lose the protection of federal standards providing that they receive preventive and primary health care. They would lose the protection of federal standards providing that they receive all necessary immunization, and they would lose such protection for dental care. This is simply not acceptable!

The President is trying to hoodwink the American people into believing that one of the most successful child development programs ever needs to be "fixed." Head Start isn't broken, but it is under threat from Republican meddling. My constituents have seen the Bush bait and switch before—on education, on the economy, and on prescription drugs. They won't be fooled this time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE).

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, as a father, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2210, which will dismantle Head Start, which should be strengthened, not weakened, in any economic time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Georgia (Ms. MAJETTE).

(Ms. MAJETTE asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MAJETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2210, which will dismantle Head Start and rob children of their best opportunity to break the cycle of poverty and to become successful, happy, and healthy adults.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request

to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN).

(Ms. BALDWIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 will dismantle Head Start, leaving thousands of children without the comprehensive tools that have been a proven success for decades.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 2210.

While traveling through Wisconsin, I have seen first-hand how important this program is for our children. Its comprehensive approach to child development—through health, social and learning skills—has been proven success for over 19 million children since 1965.

The simple fact is that Head Start works. Head Start kids arrive at school more ready to learn and do better in school than low income children who don't participate in Head Start. In addition, Head Start narrows the readiness gap between Head Start kids and their more affluent peers.

I have also heard countless personal stories about how Head Start has strengthened entire families. Parents who may have limited resources to provide for their children in other ways are overjoyed to enroll their children in Head Start. They know it is an investment in their child's future—something that they can do now to benefit their children for their entire lives.

Why then, I ask, has such a successful and important program become the focus of an unnecessary political battle? Why has this reauthorization been the only contentious reauthorization in Head Start's 38 year history?

Because instead of strengthening Head Start by providing full funding and expanding Early Head Start, the bill's sponsor has chosen to alter the Head Start program in such a fundamental way that if these provisions are passed into law, head Start as we know it will cease to exist.

This bill starts down the slippery slope of turning Head Start into a block grant program. The eight states that participate in the block grant demonstration program would only have to meet four weak eligibility criteria. The states can then spend the block grant funds as they please with no Federal guidelines on what should constitute a Head Start program. This block grant scheme actually weakens educational standards for Head Start!

In addition, this bill allows religious institutions who participate in the Head Start program to hire and fire based on religious beliefs. I have serious concerns about direct government funding of religious organizations engaging in religious discrimination as proposed in this legislation. Under this bill, a church could refuse to hire a person who is Jewish to work as a janitor in their day care, or a Muslim soup kitchen could refuse to hire a Baptist. But not only that, a church could refuse to hire a person who is divorced if divorce is against that church's tenets and teachings, even though the position is for a secular activity. In addition to expanding religious discrimination, the bill also preempts all State and local laws against discrimination. The religious community has been an integral part of Head Start's success. They have helped millions and millions of children from all parts of the country. They have not asked for this provision.

Finally, this bill actually cuts funds for teacher training, while increasing educational re-

quirements for Head Start teachers. This is insulting to both the teachers who would like to further their education and to the children and families who benefit from Head Start.

Instead of attacking the Head Start program, its participants, and its teachers, we should be having a real discussion of how to improve the program. Only 60 percent of eligible preschoolers participate in Head Start due to a lack of funding. And only 3 percent of eligible children participate in Early Head Start. Instead of dismantling a successful program, we should provide additional funding to expand opportunities for all children in our country.

I urge my colleagues to vote against H.R. 2210.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from California (Ms. HARMAN).

(Ms. HARMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, as a California mother of four who values early education, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2210.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from California (Mrs. DAVIS).

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 should be strengthened and not weakened for families and their children.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from California (Ms. ESHOO).

(Ms. ESHOO asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2210. Head Start should be strengthened even more, rather than dismantled. It is the most effective program for children in our country today.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, Head Start works. It should not be dismantled. The Republican Party should not dismantle Head Start.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 will dismantle Head Start, despite its proven effectiveness for our children and despite its demonstrated scientific validity.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN).

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 would dismantle Head Start and take dedicated teachers from the children and families who depend on them.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER).

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2210. Head Start has more than paid for itself over these years, giving children precisely what it says, a head start on education and a much better society for the rest of us. I ask that it not be dismantled.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2210, which in essence really will dismantle the Head Start Program, which has proven its effectiveness, and has provided youngsters an opportunity to realize their potential to grow, to become productive members of our society. It would be contrary to the role that we have in this institution to turn our backs on a program that has been so effective in making a difference in the lives of children and families. We should not do it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 will dismantle the most effective of all Great Society programs, Head Start.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN).

(Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 will dismantle Head Start. The Republican example of compassionate conservatism is destroying our best early childhood education program for our children. If it isn't broke, don't fix it; and, whatever you do, don't break it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Ohio for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, what we have just seen is a powerful demonstration of women and two men that represent nearly 13 million people in the United States of America.

One would think that this highly contentious Head Start reauthorization bill would be the kind of thing that would allow us to not have this kind of undertaking. One would think that this would be a simple four-step process involving the systematic introduction of a bill that increases funding and expands Head Start services; followed by committee markups to ensure the bill includes bipartisan interests; next, it is placed on the calendar; and, finally, a 15-minute vote with the passing of Head Start reauthorization. But since the Republicans are in control of the House, it is never that simple. Instead, I wind up opposing the rule and the underlying bill on Head Start.

Head Start is America's best known Federal program. Of the more than 20 million children and families that are enrolled in Head Start nationwide, there are 2,574 Head Start children in my congressional district alone, including 41 Head Start centers with a total of 127 classrooms. Of those Head Start children in my district, 98 percent of them live in families that receive public assistance or have incomes that are below the Federal poverty line.

These kids receive a gamut of services which include medical and dental care, mental health services, disability assessment and treatment and family assistance.

In fact, studies have shown that Head Start narrows the gap between disadvantaged children and other children, narrows that gap in vocabulary, writing skills, and social behavior. Head Start children are less likely to repeat a grade, require special education or be convicted of a crime. And I underscore, 80 percent of all of the children who start and end Head Start do not wind up in prison. These children show IQ gains compared to low-income children who are not in the program and are more likely to graduate from high school and college.

Mr. Speaker, I cite these statistics to simply say it seems to me that, as one of the gentlewomen said, If it ain't broke, don't fix it. This seems to be a solution in search of a problem.

Although Head Start has a well-documented record of improving the education and health of participating children, Republicans seek to begin its evisceration. The current proposal by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle is completely without reason.

While H.R. 2210 does seek to reauthorize Head Start funding, it also seeks to undermine and erode the foundation of Head Start programs through its proposed change. We need legislation that will build upon and ensure Head Start's continued success.

We would not be building upon its success if we passed a bill that begins

the state-by-state dismantling of Head Start programs by establishing block grants in eight States, Florida included.

We would not be building upon its success if we passed a bill that promotes discrimination in hiring by ignoring civil rights laws and lowers Federal standards.

We would not be building upon its success if we passed a bill that literally and figuratively shortchanges teachers by not mandating an increase in pay and denies services to eligible children through an insignificant increase in funding.

Mr. Speaker, I might also add that of the 25 amendments that we heard in the Committee on Rules that were offered by Democrats, only two were allowed, and the one Republican amendment by arguably the most qualified Member of the House on this particular matter, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURPHY), a child psychologist, was also rejected.

This is shameful, and, frankly, sinister. You Republicans really know how to kick a kid when he is down. First the child tax credit, now this. What is next? Maybe there is a Republican bill out there that outlaws kickball or stickball.

Mr. Speaker, this body owes the American people a reauthorization that significantly increases funding and allows for the expansion of Head Start and Early Head Start. We will be doing a disservice to lower-income families and the future of America to pass the bill on the floor today. I urge rejection of this Draconian rule and of the underlying bill.

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

□ 1630

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 5 minutes to my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from the great State of Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), the chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce from which this bill arose.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Ohio for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule for H.R. 2210, the School Readiness Act, important legislation that will help close the readiness gap that exists between Head Start children and their more affluent peers.

This rule clears the way for consideration of a consensus agreement reached among Members who believe children in Head Start deserve the very best that our Nation can give them. It clears the way for steps supported by the President that will strengthen the academic components of Head Start, ensure that well-qualified teachers are helping Head Start children get ready for school, and encourage coordination between Head Start and other successful State programs.

These changes are badly needed. Children in Head Start are learning, but

they are not learning as much as they deserve to be learning. There is still a significant school readiness gap between children in Head Start and their peers when they enter kindergarten, and that is simply not acceptable. Children in Head Start deserve the same shot at a good education as every other child in America. These children are capable of achieving the same things, and they deserve that chance and nothing less.

When Head Start was a new program in 1964, it aimed to give disadvantaged children a "head start" by allowing them to begin learning earlier than everyone else who started in school in the first grade. Now, most States run their own pre-kindergarten programs and virtually every child attends kindergarten.

Unfortunately, Head Start has not changed with the times. As this chart shows, Head Start's graduates beginning kindergarten are more than 25 percentile points below in average skills like recognizing letters, numbers, shapes, and colors. And when compared to what other children are learning before they start school, disadvantaged children are not getting an even start, much less a head start. Too many children in Head Start are being left behind.

The average child entering kindergarten today is right here, at the 50 percentile, and if we look at the numbers across the bottom of this chart, we can begin to see where Head Start children are in each of these subject areas. We can do better and we must do better.

And it is not because there is a lack of funding. We have almost doubled funding for Head Start since 1995. What is holding Head Start back is that it has become isolated from change and improvement. It has been walled off from other good programs that it should be coordinated with.

Today, States administer the vast majority of programs that provide early childhood care and education. Even programs funded by the Federal Government, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, child care and development block grant funds are administered by State governments. Head Start is the only program that lies outside of this network.

If we are going to ensure children in Head Start get the best our Nation can give them, qualified States need more freedom to coordinate Head Start with these programs. There is an agreement on this across the ideological spectrum, from the Brookings Institution to the Heritage Foundation, from the Wall Street Journal to the Washington Post, from faith-based organizations to State school leaders.

The rule would allow for consideration of the bill that will strengthen Head Start by addressing this need in up to eight States, so long as those eight States meet tough new rigorous standards. The bill also ensures that Head Start children can benefit from

the full talents and compassion of America's faith-based organizations by restoring civil rights protections for such groups and removing barriers that discourage them from participating in the Head Start program.

The 1964 Civil Rights Act established that faith-based organizations have the right to hire workers on a religious basis; for example, a Catholic organization can intentionally hire Catholic individuals under the law. Over the years, though, many Federal programs have trampled on this right, including Head Start. It is just wrong; it is just as wrong to deny any civil right to any other group or individual. If a Catholic group operating Head Start intentionally hires Catholic individuals, that organization should not have to worry that it may be breaking the law.

The rule allows consideration of the measure that would restore this protection to faith-based organizations and ensure that they are full participants in the effort to prepare disadvantaged children for school. The rule allows for consideration of a base bill that will address these pressing needs.

President Clinton signed four different bills during his Presidency that do exactly the same thing that the faith-based provision in this underlying bill does. Yet, some of our friends on the other side of the aisle disagree with that proposal. The rule accommodates their concerns by allowing for an open debate on an amendment that would strike this provision from the bill. It also allows for a substitute offered by our colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

I would urge my colleagues to support the rule and to support the underlying bill.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA), my good friend.

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

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this rule on H.R. 2210. The bill, which the majority has brought to the floor, is not a good-faith effort to reauthorize the Nation's premier early childhood education program, the only program that exists to serve some of the most deprived children. Instead, the majority has stifled serious debate on areas of need within the Head Start program. They have refused to significantly increase the funding resources for this vital program.

The majority say they are for improving the quality of Head Start and access to Head Start, but only, only if it does not cost money. Once again, poor children and families are left off of the majority's list of priorities.

Under this restrictive rule, the majority refuses to debate many of the critical amendments by Members on this side of the aisle. Because of the majority, we will not debate how to help Head Start teachers earn their

B.A. degrees or how to increase their wages. We will not debate how to expand Head Start to all eligible children. We will not debate the appropriate use of assessments in the education of our youngest children.

I had offered an amendment to increase funding for Early Head Start and improve its services for limited-English-proficient families. The majority refused to allow me. Early Head Start currently reaches only 3 percent of the eligible families. Access to this program for Hispanic and limited-English-proficient families falls below these dismal national figures.

In the entire State of Texas, the second most populous State in the Nation, only 2,500 infants and toddlers are being served. The need is great, yet my proposed amendment will never get a vote on the House Floor.

I urge my colleagues to defeat this unfair rule.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield four minutes to my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE), a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, as I have talked to my colleagues here in the House, I have been really surprised and somewhat dismayed at the amount of misunderstanding and misinformation we have had regarding this particular bill. We have already heard some of those: We are going to dismantle Head Start. I do not think anybody on this side or the other side intends to dismantle Head Start. Everyone values Head Start. Head Start is not being transformed into a State-run program. It is not a block grant program. That is absolutely not true.

So currently what we are talking about is the possibility of eight States entering a pilot program, if they so choose. Now, if all 50 States say we want to keep Head Start like it is, they can keep the program in all 50 States like it is. So the maximum would be eight States in a pilot program, 42 States in a similar program that we have had previously. So it is entirely voluntary. Pilot States must increase spending for early learning and not decrease it, so it does not take money from Head Start.

I have often heard, as I talk to people around the floor here, Well, we are afraid that this is going to take money away from Head Start. This is not structured in this way. Actually, the State must increase its spending; no Head Start dollars will be transferred to the State.

This will create a seamless, coordinated early learning program in pilot programs instead of a two-track system. Right now, we have Head Start in most States and we have State-run early learning programs, and they exist side-by-side. There is no coordination. There is no commonality of standards. We think this is wasteful and inefficient.

So what we are talking about is a program that will serve more children

and will have higher standards, not lower.

Also, the Castle bill increases Head Start funding, as we have said previously, by \$202 million, up to \$6.9 billion, which, as the gentleman from Ohio (Chairman BOEHNER) said, has more than doubled since 1995. It raises the standards for teacher qualifications. It does not lower standards at all.

Head Start continues to be administered by Health and Human Services. It not being transferred to another department. Again, that is a myth that has been out there for some reason.

Health and nutrition programs remain in place. They will not be changed at all.

Underachieving Head Start programs receive additional funds. This is one thing I think we really need to look at and think about.

The academic content of Head Start is strengthened while maintaining important socialization components. So as has been stated earlier, there is an emphasis on pre-mathematics, which currently is not something that happens in most Head Start programs. There is also an emphasis on pre-science, which again is not emphasized in Head Start programs currently; also in pre-reading.

Currently, most Head Start programs say all you have to do is be able to recognize 10 letters of the alphabet. Well, by the time you are four years old, you had better know the whole alphabet. So we think that we can make considerable improvements.

What we would like to emphasize here is that according to the Family and Child Experience Survey, the average child entering Head Start in terms of school readiness ranks in the 21st percentile. Two years later, \$6,500 a year later, that child leaves Head Start at the 24th percentile, which is hardly statistically significant.

We cannot afford to do this. So if you start in the lower one-fourth of readiness and you end Head Start in the lower one-fourth, by the age of 16, you are probably still in the lower one-fourth, because where you start is usually where you finish. Now, that is critical. So something needs to be done to address this problem. So that is all we are saying.

Let us make some changes here. This is not a perfect program, but it is a good program, and we are trying to make it better.

So we hope that people will consider and will understand the bill better. We think if they understand it, they will vote for it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ).

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

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, in Texas we say, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." I oppose H.R. 2210.

Head Start is one of the greatest programs this government has produced. It is highly successful; and it is by no means broke . . . so this action by the House is unwarranted. If we pass this bill today, we will be denying hundreds of thousands of little kids from poor homes a solid foundation from which to begin their lives.

Since the beginning of the program, Head Start has provided the foundation for low-income working families. Upon this foundation, thousands of adults throughout South Texas have overcome tremendous obstacles to break the cycle of family poverty and become productive citizens. Without the foundation of Head Start, the children and families in the 21st century will have a much harder time trying to get a start on education, nutrition habits, and other basic health care needs.

In South Texas, we have a long and successful relationship with Head Start. In my district alone, Head Start serves nearly 4,000 kids from birth to 5 years old. Head Start offers several unique opportunities and programs to South Texas; including transportation, parent training, Diabetes and obesity education, general nutrition information, and services for immunizations, counseling and dental health. Their whole-family approach to these services vastly improves the health and education in South Texas.

By providing transportation to the program facilities, the South Texas Head Start helps parents who are too impoverished to have their own transportation from smaller towns to the Head Start facilities. By training parents through English courses, promoting GEDs, increasing literacy, and offering job referral services, parents learn to be self-sufficient for themselves, their kids and their community.

One of the more valuable offerings of the local Head Start is the Diabetes and obesity education. The Hispanic population suffers from diabetes at two times the rate of whites. Of Hispanic 2½ to 3 year-old kids, 50 percent will likely be diagnosed with diabetes within their lifetime, according to a recent CDC study.

Losing weight, of course, can prevent diabetes, along with exercising and following a sensible diet, all of which Head Start teaches local families. Through providing nutrition information to parents and kids with a focus on healthy eating and balanced meals, kids will develop healthier habits and break the cycle of obesity and diabetes.

By offering a comprehensive immunization record for kids to get the appropriate shots, Head Start helps prevent increase in spread of disease along the international border, where disease is often rampant. Dental services through Head Start educate parents and kids in proper dental hygiene and about how nutrition affects oral health.

Through counseling services, Head Start serves the many kids with severe emotional problems, who come from difficult backgrounds. Head Start works with professionals, parents and kids to improve the emotional well-being of the kids before they start school.

That's the overview of Head Start in South Texas; but let me share with you stories from people who have used this program and precisely what we will be taking away from the children of Texas and other states around the Nation.

Jaime Reyna—28-year-old with a Master's Degree in pediatric physical therapy, fondly

recalls learning, not just numbers, colors and how to read, but also how to build self-esteem through social interactions with other kids.

Victor Saucedo—Honors graduate and varsity football player from Texas A&M University-Kingsville, is currently a football, basketball, and track coach who will travel to Reno, Nevada next spring to take a shot at the NFL. He attributes his outgoing leadership style to the encouragement and interaction he had from his Head Start teachers and peers.

Lizandro Garcia—4th-year student at University of Texas-Brownsville, is earning his Master's degree in accounting while holding a steady job as the Accounts Payable Supervisor. He says that thanks to the teaching he received at Head Start, teaching him to always be your best, strive higher and never settle for second best, he has been able to succeed in life.

Antonio Guerra—Principal of Elma Barrera Elementary School in Santa Rosa, Texas, says that even though he didn't understand the importance of being in Head Start as a child, he does remember that the people were friendly, smart and caring. He came from a low-income single parent home, where the things other kids take for granted weren't always affordable, but where education was a high priority. Head Start provided him with the educational foundation to improve his future.

Melissa Duran—Attended Head Start in the early 70s, went to college and worked as a Head Start teacher for a couple of years after graduation. She received her Child Development credentials through the Head Start program, and now has owned her own two Day Care Centers for 11 years.

Pat Gomez—Parent of three boys who went through Head Start. The program gave them the opportunity to gain self-esteem and confidence in themselves. They are all successfully employed. One is a dentist.

Ms. Davis—Single mother of one son who went through Head Start. Because of the one-on-one attention her son received, he changed from being shy and withdrawn to an outgoing young man who is now a successful lawyer.

Ida Gonzalez—Raised by her grandmother who spoke very little English. She specifically remembers learning how to brush her teeth, jump rope, eat healthy food and was prepared enough academically to stay ahead of her peers in the Gifted and Talented Program once she entered school. Her love of learning motivated her to become a teacher and child advocate.

Jessika Perez—Former Head Start student who is currently beginning her senior year at Texas A&M University where she received full scholarship for all four years. She has spent summers working at California State University with NASA researchers, and plans to start her own Engineering Firm after graduating with her Masters Degree in Civil Engineering.

This is only a small sample of what this House is ready to end if we pass H.R. 2210.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS), my good friend.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, no American citizen should have to pass someone else's religious test to qualify for a federally funded job. That is why I am strongly supporting the Woolsey amendment allowed under this rule.

Without the Woolsey amendment, private groups could actually receive millions of Federal Head Start dollars to run Head Start programs, and then

with those public tax dollars, they could hire and fire people not based on whether they could help educate and support children, but whether they passed a religious test. That is wrong.

For any citizen to have to choose between his or her job and personal religious faith makes a mockery of the free exercise clause in the first amendment of our Constitution.

Let me be specific, without the Woolsey amendment, a group associated with Bob Jones University could receive a multimillion dollar Federal grant and use those tax dollars to put out a sign that says this: No Jews or Catholics need apply here for a federally funded job.

Now, if you think it is okay to have that kind of religious discrimination using Federal dollars, then vote against the Woolsey amendment. If, like many Americans and the vast majority of Americans, you think that that kind of religious bigotry is wrong, then vote for the Woolsey amendment.

Without the Woolsey amendment, American women could be denied a federally funded Head Start job simply because a grant recipient says, in their religious beliefs, women really should not have the right to work. Without the Woolsey amendment, a Federal Head Start grantee would ask job applicants the most private of religious questions and then refuse to hire someone based on their answers.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, how Members on the floor right now would feel if somebody, while they were applying for a job, somebody asked them these questions: Are you a Christian? Are you Jewish? Are you Muslim?

□ 1645

Did you tithe to your church last year? Do you believe in evolution or creationism? How many times did you attend church last year? What religious beliefs are you teaching your children? How many times did you pray yesterday?

Protect the fundamental American principle of religious freedom by voting for the Woolsey amendment.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA), a member of my very own class in Congress.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time.

I am pleased to come before the House on this issue, and I am so glad this issue is being discussed. I have waited some 10 years for this issue to be discussed in this manner before the House of Representatives.

This is the most important vote that this House of Representatives and this Congress will have since we did welfare reform because we are talking about the future of our most needy and deserving citizens, our most disadvantaged citizens. We are talking about the children of those individuals in our society who need a Head Start and we were not providing that.

I have heard rhetoric from the other side, and we saw the parade of medioc-

rity coming down the aisle advocating the continuation of the same, the same exact situation.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would most respectfully ask that the gentleman's words with reference to idiocracy be stricken, but without asking a ruling from the Chair, I would ask the gentleman to give consideration to undertaking to do that before making such a demand. He said idiocracy.

Mr. MICA. Mediocrity. That is what we are talking about today.

We are talking about mediocrity and perpetuating mediocrity among our neediest students and those who really need an advantage. Let me say, I have a degree in education and my interest is in the quality of the education. And for the first time, a President has come forward with a package that would not ensure mediocrity but ensure quality in the Head Start program for the very first time.

Let me give an example. I come from a district that is very broad and very big. I represent large counties, and I represent small counties. So I spent the time some 6 and 8 years ago and have been back again to look at the Head Start program and the preschool programs to see what they are doing. I can tell you what they are doing is they are spending a lot of money. They are spending a lot of money on bureaucracy, not all on programs. I have a good program in my big county, and we are able to support that. I have two counties that are over 45 miles apart, and I begged and pleaded to try to get a Head Start program that made sense.

We went to Atlanta. We went to Washington. We said, no, you cannot do that. We do not have enough students in either county. We have 200 in one and 300 in another to support the bureaucracy that is required by Head Start. So we asked for a little flexibility, and we got no flexibility. We still have no flexibility today.

Today we have eight administrators in a program earning between \$31,000 and \$42,000. I have a total of 34 administrative various personnel required by the program for 500 students and two counties that are separated by almost 50 miles. So I am spending the monies on bureaucracy, and you will not give me the flexibility to give my kids the best chance possible.

I have got teachers; and I do not have one teacher, not one teacher out of all the so-called teachers that we have in the program that are certified. Would you want your children to go to a school if we take the certification out of the school, the pre-school programs or any of the programs that we take it out and force your children to go to that?

Today we are spending between \$12,000 for our so-called teachers and \$22,932. And my bureaucrats in the program are getting up to \$42,000. I do not have one qualified teacher and that is the mediocrity you want to resign our children to, my children to? These chil-

dren deserve a head start. That is what the program was about.

There is not one dollar cut in this. There are no standard cuts in this; but we do allow a little bit of flexibility, and we do allow quality. The President has requested quality in the program. For the first time we will have people who actually have had an education to educate our weakest, poorest-performing students. Is that a lot to ask for, I ask you?

I have waited some 8, 9 years for these students. Do not deny my students this opportunity. Do not deny them quality. Do not deny them flexibility. Do not relegate them to mediocrity or bureaucracy.

You can tell I am very passionate about this. I feel very strongly about this. This is the biggest improvement we can make for the future of these children. I do not ask you to accept this. I plead with you to work with us to try to improve this program. We do not cut money. We do not cut quality. We make improvements and I ask you to help us.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 10 seconds.

To the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA), I went to school in Alta Mont Springs. There were no certified teachers. Every one of them loved me. My mama and daddy and grandmama never went to school and somehow or another I managed to get three degrees.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER), my very good friend and a leader in this field; and I invite the House to listen for 2 minutes to the gentleman.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this unfair rule.

Just yesterday a very contrite leader in the Republican Party acknowledged a chronic mistreatment of members of the minority of this House.

On Monday, the former Republican leader talked about an emerging theme in this House. The theme is 10 years of one-party rule is enough. The Republicans have had control for 10 years. They have gotten arrogant. They demean the institution. They demean democracy by virtue of their heavy-handed way they run the House, minority rights are downtrodden, and it is time for a change.

The rule we have here today is a perfect example of the arrogant and abusive treatment that is directed not just at Democrats but 140 million Americans who sent us here to represent them and look out for their interests and particularly the children. Many of those Americans feel very strongly about Head Start programs. Many of their children participate in it, and they would like to know this program is going to be improved. But we have the same old arrogance we saw last week with the pension bill.

Last minute changes were made in this legislation at 11 o'clock last night. When we asked the right to change our

substitute to take into account those changes, we were told we would not be given the opportunity. So instead we will not be able to offer the amendments that people came before the Committee on Rules and asked for.

So what is the result? The result is for the first time in the history of this program, for the first time in the history of this program, where we had Republican Presidents, Republican Congresses, Democratic Congress, we have always sought to improve this program.

For the first time in history we have a partisan attack on Head Start, and for the first time in history we are undermining the performance standards, the quality standards in this program. And for the first time in history, we will be limiting the participation of children in Head Start. In the third year of this bill because of the caps on funding for the first time in history under any administration in any Congress, we will reduce the number of Head Start children that will be able to participate from the current population. No Republican President in the past has ever done that. No Congress has ever done that. No Democratic President has done that because we have had a national consensus, because this is the best program we have in the Nation, with the best results.

You may want to do a lot of things with this program, but you cannot put it somewhere where a program has better results than Head Start. This attack should be rejected and this rule should be rejected.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA), the distinguished colleague of mine and the dean of our delegation, a former elementary school teacher and principal himself, and, most importantly, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services that funds this bill.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2210, the School Readiness Act of 2003. As a former elementary teacher and an elementary principal, I am aware of the necessity of a first-rate education and the need to ensure that children have adequate skills before entering kindergarten. You cannot start too soon. My daughter-in-law reads to my 16-month-old granddaughter, and here we are talking about children who are 2, 3, 4 years old.

The Head Start program has been a successful program over the years, providing comprehensive services to many children not otherwise reached, and providing students with some of the basics needed to be successful in school.

As successful as Head Start has been, I believe that the program can be even more successful by maintaining the comprehensive services already provided and enhancing, that is the key word, the academic component. H.R. 2210 will allow the Head Start program

to achieve this goal by emphasizing cognitive development, improving teacher quality, and providing extra help for Head Start programs identified as underachieving.

I would like to emphasize, as my colleagues have stated, that there will be no additional testing required of the children in this program. Further, arbitrary performance measures will be eliminated, ensuring that the performances of Head Start centers are more fairly evaluated.

Because of the value of the comprehensive services, recently referred to as the crown jewel of Head Start, this legislation will keep the program at the Department of Health and Human Services, preserving and extending the health and nutrition components. The bill authorizes a level of more than \$200 million over the current level and limits Federal Government administrative expenses allowing as many as 10,000 more children, 10,000 more to be served by the Head Start program.

I would like to add that in the appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education that this body recently approved, we provide an additional \$148 million. This bill was just approved a few weeks ago. We added \$148 million to the program. I might point out that in the last 8 years the Republican majority has more than doubled the amount going to Head Start.

I hear conversation about how the program is not getting adequately funded. The facts are the facts. Funding has more than doubled in the last 8 years since we have been responsible. Additionally, the bill contains incentives for States to maintain or expand funding of early childhood education. Education should be seamless. It should start with the Head Start program, go through the elementary into the high school and on to the college level. And I have had a real concern since I have been chairman of this subcommittee about the number of high school dropouts. Many of the major cities are in excess of 50 percent in the dropout rate. That is a terrible waste of human capital; and we need to address it. One of the key elements in this is the ability to read. I do not think decisions are made by young people at the ninth grade or the tenth grade to drop out. Those decisions are made when they do not learn to read at the first, second, third, fourth, fifth grade level.

Therefore, the Head Start program as envisioned by this bill will be an added component to ensure that individuals will have skills so that when they reach high school they can participate. They can read. They can comprehend, and they can be ensured that they will get the skills they need to participate in our economy.

We hear today about unemployment levels. We hear about people not finding jobs, and the need for skills only grows. Therefore, I think this program

is a very important part of the early education of a young person, of a child and on into adulthood. I would urge my colleagues to support this legislation. Give these kids the same chance that others have. That is what it is. It is Head Start. And we want to give them a head start, and this bill will do that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The Chair would advise Members that the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) has 18½ minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) has 5¼ minutes remaining.

□ 1700

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for a unanimous consent to the gentlewoman from Kansas City, Missouri (Ms. MCCARTHY).

(Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I believe the rule to H.R. 2210 will dismantle Head Start which, in these desperate economic times, should be strengthened, not weakened.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the rule on the School Readiness Act, which would seriously jeopardize the Head Start early education program.

For decades, Head Start has been a successful program dedicated to helping disadvantaged children receive the preparation they need to succeed in school and to lead better lives. This bill would leave our neediest children behind by shortchanging the Head Start program and putting its federal funding at risk in States that are mired in their own budget woes.

In my district of Kansas City, MO, over 3,800 children are enrolled in Head Start programs and they depend on help from the Federal Government. Head Start is one of the oldest and most thoroughly studied early education programs in America. Studies find that children involved in Head Start programs are less likely to repeat a grade and to require special education services than disadvantaged children who are not lucky enough to experience Head Start. Furthermore, Head Start students are more likely to graduate high school and to attend college.

This past Fall a young mother named Michelle enrolled her son, August, in a Head Start program in Kansas City. Her two older daughters had already successfully completed the program, but Michelle worried that her son's speech and physical disabilities would put him far behind his classmates when he started kindergarten. The Head Start Mental Health and Disability Consultant coordinated his efforts with the County Health Department and the North Kansas City School District to insure that Michelle's fears would not become a reality. An Individualized Education plan was put into place and August was enrolled in speech therapy classes. Today, all of Michelle's children are doing well academically and socially, and she stays involved in Head Start as a volunteer so that she can give back to the program that meant so much to her and her children.

The measure before us (H.R. 2210) authorizes barely enough funds to even cover the cost of inflation, let alone expand Head Start

programs. It will actually reduce the number of children in the program. It provides no resources for teacher training and will allow discrimination in hiring practices. But the part of this legislation that concerns me the most is that it puts Head Start money into the hands of States that will be able to use these block grant funds to defray their own deficits rather than expanding the program to reach students.

Governor Holden of Missouri shares my concern that resources usually suffer when a federal program becomes a block grant. It is his fear, and mine, that federal mandates will be shifted to deficit wracked states such as mine, forcing them to do more with less money.

Head Start works in Missouri, and it works all over the country. Let's put federal dollars into education programs such as Head Start that have been proven to make students ready for a successful school experience and a productive life. It's the best investment we can make for our Nation's future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), my very good friend.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Woolsey anti-discrimination amendment and against the part of the bill which would allow employment discrimination based on religion in the Head Start program for the first time since the program began.

Yesterday, the bipartisan leadership of the House and Senate celebrated the historic March on Washington and praised the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., and others for their courageous demonstration 40 years ago. Let us not forget what that march was about because two of the demands of the March on Washington were:

"Withholding of Federal funds from all programs in which discrimination exists" and "a Federal Fair Employment Practices Act barring discrimination." Both of those demands were enacted within 2 years of the march.

Now, one day after the bipartisan celebration, we have a bill before us which undermines the same victories which were celebrated. But the Woolsey amendment will preserve the tradition of nondiscrimination in federally funded programs. That tradition goes back to 1941, when President Roosevelt issued an executive order prohibiting antidiscrimination laws that have not caused all these problems over all these years. In fact, today 8 percent of Head Start programs are sponsored by faith-based organizations, and Head Start officials recently expressed outrage that someone could tell a Head Start child's parents that they were not qualified to be Head Start teachers solely because they attended a synagogue rather than a church or a mosque rather than a temple.

Next year, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. That case spoke of the ravages of segregation when it stated that "the pol-

icy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the Negro group. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn. Segregation with the sanction of law, therefore, has a tendency to retard the educational and mental development of the Negro children."

Mr. Speaker, although the children in the Head Start programs may not be segregated, some will not miss the message their parents were not qualified to be teachers while parents of other children were qualified.

Mr. Speaker, we have a choice today. Preserve the equal employment opportunity principles and traditions established by President Roosevelt, *Brown v. Board of Education* and the March on Washington or change the law in such a way that someone will have to explain to some young Head Start students why their parents were not good enough to be teachers solely because of the family religion.

The vote on this amendment will determine what kind of Head Start the next generation will have.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), my very good friend.

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the bill as crafted and to this rule. I also urge my colleagues to support the substitute that will be offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) and the amendment to be offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

The bill creates a new block grant for eight States and eliminates the obligation that States abide by Head Start's educational performance standards by allowing governors to increase class size, increase child-to-staff ratios, dumb down existing curricula, all without any accountability.

The President has told us repeatedly that his goal is to leave no child behind. Unfortunately, the reality fails to match the rhetoric. Because of inadequate funding, we are already leaving 400,000 children behind. An appalling 40 percent of those eligible to participate in Head Start cannot participate because of short funding.

With the changes made by this bill, even more of our at-risk, eligible children will be shut out of this successful program, endangering their opportunities to succeed in school and to contribute all they might to this Nation. We must not deny children the health, social and educational services they need. This Nation cannot afford to cheat its future by robbing our children of educational opportunities today.

Without the amendment to be offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY), the bill would betray our core values by explicitly permitting, for the first time in the history of this program, religious discrimination

in employment. It would allow Head Start programs that use taxpayer funds to discriminate against teachers and parent volunteers solely because of their religious convictions.

The bill does so by eliminating existing law that has, since the beginning of the Head Start program, protected the people who teach our children against this most reprehensible form of discrimination. No public school, no publicly funded Head Start program should be permitted to hang out a sign that says no Jews or Catholics or Protestants or Muslims or whatever need apply. Incredibly, this bill deliberately would allow them to do just that. For shame.

Head Start is an exceptional program that has served nearly a million children and their families. It works. It works well. Instead of cutting its funding and eliminating basic standards and promoting religious discrimination, we should be standing up and expanding this program and not destroying it.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the legislation and to this rule. I also urge my colleagues to support the substitute that will be offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MILLER), and the amendment to be offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

This bill creates a new block grant program for eight states, yet it eliminates the obligation that states abide by Head Start's educational performance standards by allowing governors to increase class size, increase child to staff ratios, dumb-down existing curricula—all without any accountability.

The President has repeatedly told us that his goal is to leave no child behind. Unfortunately, the reality fails to match the rhetoric. Due to inadequate funding, we are already leaving behind over 400,000 children—an appalling 40 percent of those eligible to participate in Head Start.

With the changes made by this bill, even more of our most at-risk, eligible children will be shut out of this successful program, compromising their opportunities to succeed in school and contribute all they could to our nation. We cannot continue to deny children the health, social, and educational services they need. This nation cannot afford to rob its future by robbing our children of educational opportunities today.

This bill also betrays our core values by permitting, for the first time in the history of the Head Start program, religious discrimination. It allows taxpayer funds to be used in Head Start programs that discriminate against teachers and parent volunteers solely because of their religious convictions. The bill does so by eliminating existing law that has, since Head Start's beginning, protected the people who teach our children against this most reprehensible form of discrimination.

We have heard terrible allegations from the other side of the aisle, and from the administration alleging, that certain members of the other body have hung a sign on the federal courts saying "No Catholics Need Apply." While I continue to believe that this slur against conscientious Catholic members of the other body is blatantly false and slanderous, those making the charge, including the President and our colleagues on the other side of

the aisle, understand that religious discrimination in employment, or the imposition of a religious test for federally funded employment in violation of the Constitution, is reprehensible and an affront to our First Freedom.

I urge my colleagues to support the Democratic substitute, and the Woolsey amendment, both of which would strip this indefensible provision from the bill.

Head Start is an exceptional program that serves nearly 1 million children and their families. We know from experience that it works and works well, helping our children succeed educationally. Instead of cutting funding, eliminating basic standards, and promoting religious discrimination, we should be standing up for families and our most vulnerable children by providing the necessary resources and accountability, to ensure that all children who qualify for the Head Start program can participate and succeed.

By failing to improve, rather than destroy, Head Start, this administration, and this bill, are making clear that our children are not valued and do not deserve a head start in life. Instead of dismantling this program, with a proven track record, that countless early childhood educators, child psychologists support, and parents support, this bill would replace it with an untested, unproven, unaccountable program.

It is time to match the rhetoric with action and leave no child behind. It is time to make good on the promise of this nation that we are all created equal, that all children are entitled to a decent education, and that no one should ever have to decide between a job helping our children and their religious faith. No child was ever helped by governmentally funded and endorsed religious discrimination. That is not what this country is about, and it is not befitting of a nation dedicated to liberty and justice for all.

I urge the rejection of this rule, and the adoption of the Democratic substitute and the Woolsey amendment.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, will the Chair tell me how much time we have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) has 13½ minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) has 5¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), my good friend.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman for yielding me the time.

I wanted to debate this at the very beginning of this very long evening because this is the rule that will design whether we work on this in a bipartisan manner or whether or not we use the singular view, My way or the highway.

This is actually Head Start retrogression, and I wish that we could have come to the floor of the House and crafted reform that would truly help our children, but Mr. Speaker, this legislation continues the saga.

Only 60 percent of preschool children are able to access the real Head Start,

19 percent only of those who are seasonal and migrant children and 3 percent only of infant and preschoolers are able to access a real Head Start program.

Mr. Speaker, if we look at America, we will find Members of this body that started in Head Start. Children who are children of incarcerated persons were in Head Start. Average Americans have had the ability to be in Head Start, but we have never finished the job, and this legislation that we have before us is going to unravel Head Start as we know it, a nurturing, caring program that has nutrition, has psychology, has education, has teachers who care and teaches parents how to access better education for their children.

Why could my Republican colleagues not see that education is a dream of all America? This rule should be denied because this rule does not address the question of giving block grant moneys to the States so that they can abuse those resources, and our children still will not have a viable Head Start program.

I support the Woolsey amendment. I support the substitute. We need to go back to the drawing board and really listen to those who have now grown up who have been products of Head Start. Ask them the question whether or not they have benefited from the ability to have immunization and good health care, good nutrition and then be able to have a loving environment to educate or to be educated in.

Why my good friends think that that is a good bill, I do not know, but the best thing to do is to send it back. It is a Head Start retrogression. Vote against the rule.

I oppose the rule governing H.R. 2210, the Head Start Authorization Act, because it denies the Minority an opportunity to make a bad bill better. Make no mistake about it; the underlying legislation is a bad bill. I regret that my colleagues and I do not have the opportunity to improve upon it.

The Republicans on the Rules Committee have denied us the opportunity to have our amendments heard, to have our colleagues vote on the amendments and to decide for themselves what best suits their constituents. The Head Start program is of critical importance to our children and this rule does not do justice to the undertaking of reauthorizing that program.

A total of 26 amendments were submitted to the Rules Committee on this bill. Of those 26 amendments, Democratic Members submitted all but one. The rule makes in order only two of those amendments: a Democratic substitute and the Woolsey/Edwards/Frank/Scott/Van Hollen amendment to restore civil rights protections to Head Start teachers by striking the language in the bill that allows Head Start programs to discriminate in hiring with regard to religion. Certainly, those are both excellent amendments and it is my hope that they will be adopted. Then, this bad bill will be better. Those two amendments however, were not the only worthy amendments that should have been allowed to come to this floor.

There was Mr. GRIJALVA's Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and Indian Head Start

amendment which calls for additional funds to be allocated to Head Start. That is important because the legislation currently on the table will prevent more than 80 percent of eligible children from benefiting from Head Start services. The U.S. Department of Health has found that Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Programs serve only 31,400 out of 161,400 migrant and seasonal children; this is a mere 19 percent of all eligible children. That overwhelming shortfall leaves 130,000 children of migrant and seasonal Head Start families behind.

This is simply unacceptable; America's children deserve better. As a Texan, I understand the importance of that amendment, as would many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. I wish that we had the opportunity to vote for the Grijalva amendment.

The amendment proposed by Mr. GRIJALVA aimed to minimize the existing gaps that are preventing the children of migrant and seasonal workers from receiving the early education that prepares children for more structured schooling later in life. The amendment calls for an increase in the total authorization of early education programs from \$6.87 billion to \$7 billion and raises the set-aside for each of these programs from 13 percent to 15 percent. While Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Programs as well as Indian Head Start programs serve both infants and toddlers, the fact remains that neither program has access to Early Head Start Funds. However, these funds are available to Regional Head Start programs. The only way Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and Indian Head Start Programs can receive increases is if additional funds are appropriated. That is what the Grijalva amendment would do.

By making a modest increase in the funding for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start as well as Indian Head Start programs, we would be able to move these programs toward parity and ultimately to reduce the significant funding gap. What a small price to pay for the success of our children. Given the chance I would have urged my colleagues to vote in favor of the Grijalva amendment and to support the measure on behalf of America's marginalized children. Due to the Republican's restrictive and unfair rule, I will not have the opportunity to do so.

The Republican leadership of the Rules Committee closed out a number of other valuable amendments. One of those amendments was offered by Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. His amendment would have provided scholarships to Head Start teachers to assist them with the cost of obtaining a post-secondary degree. It is stunning that the majority denied this amendment because post-secondary degrees will be a requirement for half of current Head Start teachers, if this version of H.R. 2210 passes.

If we are to demand higher levels of formal education from Head Start teachers then we must compensate them fairly. Unfortunately, well-educated Head Start teachers can earn more by taking a new job teaching kindergarten. It is a fact that a teacher with a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education can earn, on average, about \$16,000 a year more teaching in a public school kindergarten than working in a Head Start program. That is nearly double the salary. How then can we expect these teachers to bear the expense of attaining additional education and then remain

as Head Start employees earning lower salaries? It is illogical and frankly, it is unlikely that most Head Start teachers will make that choice.

We know that these teachers are caring people. They want to remain in their jobs working with children and families that need them most. Without the Davis amendment, however, H.R. 2210 will make that financially impossible for many Head Start teachers. The result could be a great loss to Head Start programs, to the children they serve and thus to the future of the country.

I too offered amendments to the underlying bill. I too had those amendments shut out of the process. One amendment was written to maintain the mandate for a study comparing the educational achievement, social adaptation, and health status of children participating in Head Start programs with that of eligible children who do not participate. The underlying bill would eliminate that study. It is apparent, that the data gained from the study would be useful in adding to our understanding of the importance of Head Start and the ways in which we can improve program.

Among those children who are eligible for Head Start, the study would focus on the developmental differences between children who participate in Head Start and those who do not. Such a study could be particularly relevant as we seek to better accommodate the increasing number of special needs disabled children, emotionally or mentally challenged children, and non-English-speaking Head Start children.

In Texas, and in other states, there are thousands of children who are eligible for Head Start but who are not enrolled. Those children are entitled to the services that they would receive from the Head Start program. The families of those children would benefit from the holistic approach of Head Start as it seeks to educate not only the child but also the child's parents about what it takes to help a child thrive. This study is a mechanism through which we may better understand the positive impact that Head Start creates on the lives of the children and families whom it serves. Unfortunately, the Members on the other side of the aisle would not allow it to be heard on the floor.

My other amendment was authored to prevent states from using federal funds allocated under this Act to supplant other federal funds that states are currently spending on Head Start. In other words, my amendment would have helped keep Head Start dollars in Head Start programs. Under the amendment, the text of the Head Start Act would read, in part, "Funds received under this section shall not supplant any Federal, State or local funds." That language is crucial to the preservation of Head Start in states that currently spend federal dollars on Head Start centers.

Without this amendment, the cash strapped states could choose to use funds allocated under this Act to supplant funds currently being spent. Thus, there would be no net gain for the children who need the services provided by Head Start. Undoubtedly, the overburdened states will use this opportunity to plug federal dollars into another hole in their budgets. My amendment would have cured that problem but the majority on the Rules Committee will not allow it.

The amendment was supported by the Children's Defense Fund, yet my colleagues were

denied the opportunity to vote the amendment up or down. What a shame, Mr. Speaker. What a pity that something so important should fall prey to partisan politics.

While I am disappointed that my amendments and those of my colleagues were excluded from the legislative process here on the floor, I am substantially more disappointed about what the underlying bill will do to Head Start. I am dismayed by this rule but I am in fact more dismayed about what this bill will do to the children and families who would otherwise benefit from a healthy Head Start program. I am so disappointed and dismayed because the legislation seeks to desolve Head Start. Although the Republicans seek to disguise it, Title II of this bill will end Head Start as we know it.

Frankly, the underlying bill is the answer to a question that has not been asked. It is a solution for a problem that does not exist. The block grant created under Title II is no more than a treacherous experiment. It will push a successful program onto states that have unproven expertise to manage it. Not only does the bill push Head Start to the states for experimentation but also, it does so without the federal quality requirements and oversight that have demonstrated their success.

There are other failures in this bill that could have been corrected had the Democrats of this House been allowed to offer their amendments. Would that I had time to speak about them all but, I have only 2 minutes to speak on the rule. Would that my colleagues had the opportunity to vote on those amendment to improve this bill. Nevertheless, there is still a chance.

There is still an opportunity for this body to improve the Head Start bill. Voting "no" on this rule will allow us that opportunity. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting no on the rule. Vote no and let us come together to pass a better piece of legislation one that will strengthen not dismantle Head Start and serve the needs of our children.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA), a new Member, but a distinguished person that has dynamics with reference to this matter as a part of his portfolio.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep, deep disappointment in the Republican proposal to dismantle Head Start.

Head Start has been an historic, powerful tool in ending poverty in this country, and we heard about passion earlier today, but when we profess our passion, it should not be about empty rhetoric. It should be about real compassion, real care and real resources for children.

I am very proud of my Democratic colleagues' persistent attempts to improve this disastrous bill. Yet of the 25 Democratic amendments submitted to the Committee on Rules only two were made in order. Receiving a rewritten bill in the middle of the night last night, many of us have not had sufficient time to review the changes. From what I can see, though, this is essentially the same bill, causing lasting damage to a widely successful program like Head Start.

The bill offers no accountability. The bill repeals long-standing civil rights protections on employment discrimination; and my colleagues have addressed many of the other issues that are wrong with this bill.

I want to concentrate on one aspect. The most troubling part of this forum from my perspective is the weak attempt by the Republicans to provide a funding increase for migrant and seasonal Head Start. Before these changes, the bill would have provided between \$8.5 and \$17 million additional funds to migrant and seasonal Head Start.

This new bill creates a provision that guarantees \$17 million to this program. While this looks like an improvement, it actually only guarantees one-quarter of 1 percent of the total appropriation for eligible children of migrant and seasonal farm-working families. This modification would only extend services to 2,200 of the 130,000 eligible children that are currently neglected. This is a so-called improvement? It is a slap in the face to these children and their families.

Mr. Speaker, these children deserve equal resources. They deserve our attention and they deserve to be treated equitably in this legislation.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY), my good friend.

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I believe H.R. 2210 will dismantle Head Start and rob single moms of the best early childhood education for their children.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ) who is distinguishing herself in our body as new Member, my friend.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, let me just begin first by saying that I take umbrage to comments that were made earlier from the gentleman from Florida that the female Democratic Members of the House were "a parade of mediocrity." These are amazing, talented women who are not mediocre, but extraordinary women as evidenced by their passion on this issue.

Having said that, I rise in opposition to this flawed rule. We are considering a bad bill, the so-called School Readiness Act, H.R. 2210, without any options for improvement. There are so many things wrong with this bill that I cannot even begin to count them.

A fair rule would have allowed us to fix some of those things, like providing adequate funding to expand Head Start, especially migrant and seasonal Head Start programs, and providing scholarships for Head Start teachers.

H.R. 2210 begins an irreversible process of dismantling Head Start by promoting religious discrimination in hiring, shortchanging teachers by increasing requirements and denying services

to eligible children by continuing to underfund Head Start.

Worst of all, H.R. 2210 puts in danger years of proven success. For what? An experiment, a so-called pilot program that does not require States to even abide by national Head Start standards or have a sound preschool infrastructure.

Nearly four decades of research have established that Head Start delivers the intended services and improves the lives and the development of children and families that it serves. Head Start is about preparing children for school like Pablo Robles, a constituent of mine. It is about helping parents become better parents and advocates for their children and involved in their school work. Ultimately, Head Start is about giving low-income children an opportunity to succeed in life.

Republicans are just like scam artists trying to sell us an oceanfront property in the desert, but now they are trying to sell us a phony Head Start bill. We must not fall for it, especially when it is gambling with the lives of children.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the rule for H.R. 2210 and on the underlying bill. Let us not play with the future of our most vulnerable children, like Pablo Robles.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, how much time do we have at this time?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SWEENEY). The gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) has 7½ minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) has 5¼ minutes remaining.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I would inquire of the gentleman as to how many speakers he has?

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Three, and we are at that time prepared to close.

Mr. PRYCE of Ohio. The gentleman may as well go ahead then, please.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very privileged and pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), who is not only my good friend, but is a person that ran a Head Start program in the United States of America while the rest of us are running our mouths about Head Start.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for allowing me this time, and I must tell my colleagues that as I stand here today, my heart is broken. It is broken because after 38 years of a successful program we allowed 90 minutes on a closed rule to destroy Head Start.

□ 1715

It is shameful. Republicans ought to know and understand what they are doing. It is another blow that you are striking against children, and poor children and poor families at that.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot help it that the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) and others do not understand how Head Start was organized, the delegate agen-

cies, to keep it closer to the communities. We bypassed the Governors on purpose to keep them from snatching the money from Head Start, and my colleagues are throwing it back into a block grant. That money is going to be siphoned off in even States like mine where we have a \$38 billion deficit.

My Republican colleagues want to throw it back into school systems and preschool programs that have no mandates, that do not mandate parental involvement, that will not guarantee nutrition programs, that will not give the physical examinations to help identify the deficiencies that these children have before we put them in the classroom and help get them ready for school.

Everyone has admitted that Head Start is successful. Each of my colleagues says that as they get up to destroy it. If it is successful, why then are we messing with Head Start? We need to try and do something about K through 12. When we send kids to Head Start, they are doing well. Sometimes they lose it because the school systems are not ready for them.

Mr. Speaker, we need more money in Head Start. It is only servicing 60 percent of the children who need it. We have waiting lists. To add insult to injury, not only do my colleagues dismantle this program by putting it into a block grant, then they bring on discrimination and only allow those parents to participate who are of the same religion of some of the delegate agencies that are trying to run a Head Start program.

Again, it is shameful. You break my heart today, and you dismantle a program that is desperately needed.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE), who was the superintendent of education in North Carolina and speaks very clearly with reference to these issues based on his experience.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman who just spoke, my friend from California. She knows what she is talking about. Head Start is working. And I rise today in opposition to this rule, and I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 2210, the Republican Head Start bill. It is not what it says it is.

Someone said earlier today, if it is not broken, do not fix it, improve it. Currently, Head Start funds are targeted directly to the specific local initiatives of children who need it. But under H.R. 2210, the responsibility for operating Head Start would shift to the State through a series of block grants. And I can tell you when you go to block grants, the next thing you are going to see is they are going to be cut and they will not go to the children who have the needs. I know. I have been there. I have been involved.

Governors have enough to do rather than trying to put their fingers in this. They can help improve it, but not run it. This change would require the establishment of a new State bureaucracy, placing yet another burden on our already cash-strapped States. Most importantly, there is no guaranty that under these block grants Federal funds would ever find their way to Head Start. Oh, sure, some of them will; but eventually we will see it slip.

Additionally, these block grants eliminate accountability and exempt States from quality standards and oversight. The bill is not a reauthorization. It is a demolition of a program that has worked so well for so many children and so many families.

We have learned that under H.R. 2210 States would be allowed to increase class size and child teacher ratios, reduce the number of hours children have to spend in Head Start, eliminate health services and supplement Federal dollars. That alone is enough to tell us not to do it. We should not allow States to supplant the dollars. Instead of recklessly dismantling Head Start, we should invest in it and improve, as we have already heard.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I will vote for the Miller substitute to this bill which will strengthen school readiness, enhance quality and accountability, expand the initiative to more children and families, all while maintaining local control and high performance standards. That is what we ought to be about in this House, making it better, not dismantling it.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 flies in the face of reason. It will ruin Head Start and needlessly jeopardize the future of thousands of children. This bill is a part of the disturbing trend in this House of trampling on low-income families and children.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), a very thoughtful member of this conference.

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to all of the discussion on the other side; and I may be missing something, but I think this bill makes sort of sense.

I believe in Head Start. I work with the people who have taught and been in it. My kids have been a part of the program. It works the way it should in some areas. In other areas it does not. Where it works, the kids compete and succeed and it is fine. Where it does not work, we find those kids as they move into kindergarten no better off than the kids who do not go to Head Start. That is not right. If we have a program we spend money on, it ought to work.

This new program, at least to me, is a win-win situation. If a State wants to take a look at its programs, it can. If it needs help, it can get it. The bill adds over \$200 million to that. If on the other hand the State likes what it has, does not want to change, it does not apply for the demo project. It does not

have to do it. And if it does, every single one of those demo projects is guaranteed to have the full 5-year funding.

I think the program makes sense, and I hope I am not missing something essential.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE).

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2210 will dismantle Head Start, resulting in lowering the quality and effectiveness and quite possibly ending one of the most successful programs our Nation has ever had. Since its inception, Head Start has served over 20 million children. Its focus on the whole child extends through recognizing the importance of the family, not only the institution. Its full-day, full-year programs provide preschool children of low-income working families with a comprehensive program to meet their emotional, social, health, nutritional, and parental support.

The bill really does a lot. It brings in parents that work with the teachers. It brings in parents who have helped design the program. It emboldens the parents then to become interested in also improving their education. It has local vendors being able to provide services to that local Head Start program. It is a program that really has a tremendous amount of impact on a local program. And having this sent to the States, I think, goes in the wrong direction; and I ask the defeat of the rule.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Education Reform, the chief sponsor and author of this legislation.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time, and I thank all the members who took enough interest in Head Start to be here today to speak. Obviously, we do not agree on everything, but they are interested, and that is good.

My view of this legislation is greatly influenced by the history of it. Looking back to 1965, in what was called the Great Society and the creation of this, many people say this is maybe the best program extant from that in terms of it being able to help children. We have heard the millions it has helped over the years. And, frankly, I believe that is accurate. I believe particularly in the areas of just well-being, in nutrition and medicine, it has been a tremendous amount of help.

This program has been continued pretty much as is directly from the Federal Government to the local grantees who run the Head Start programs. It serves today about 900,000 students at about \$7,100 a year. Most of the 4-year-olds that are eligible are served. Some 3-year-olds are served. And they

go to school for roughly half the year for roughly half a day. I think all of this is in the interest of these children because we are dealing with children who are at 100 percent of poverty, or roughly \$20,000 for a family of four. So for that reason, I think we can agree that Head Start does some good things.

On the other hand, to suggest that Head Start is doing what it should do educationally for these young kids who need it as badly as anyone else in our society would be, in my judgment, a very inaccurate statement. Another inaccurate statement I have heard today are words like dismantling Head Start. This is not an accurate statement whatsoever; and also block grant, which is also not an accurate statement.

I have had this argument so much I am almost tired of making it, but perhaps some people have not heard it. Essentially, the bottom line is that we are not block granting anything here. Forty-two States will be treated just as they were before and eight States would go through a demonstration program that would hopefully show us how better to educate these young people as far as Head Start is concerned.

Is it a block grant? Let us take a look at it. First of all, the States would have to maintain or increase their fiscal year 2003 State funding levels. Then they would have to add 5 percent to that in order to be one of the eight States which qualify. They could only use Head Start funds for Head Start-related uses. All comprehensive health and nutritional services currently provided by Head Start would continue to be provided. Parental involvement strategies must be developed. State teacher quality standards would meet or exceed the new requirements for Head Start programs. This is hardly block granting or dismantling. It just simply is not that. This is an opportunity for improvement, as far as young people are concerned.

A speaker from the other side said at one point that for the first it will reduce the number of children to be served. I do not know mathematically how anybody arrived at that. I have seen the authorization figures, and I have seen the appropriation figure for this year. The increases are there for that.

The rule itself is fair. There will be a substitute certainly that is very significant in terms of what we are going to do.

A number of other people have spoken to this legislation, Mr. Speaker; and I thought it would be interesting to go through what some other people are saying, since we are a little bit political on the floor, if you will. Today, in Roll Call, Mr. Morton Kandracke said, "Children who were in the upper 25 percent of their Head Start class when they entered Head Start in 1997 showed no gains on any measure of cognitive ability over the course of the Head Start program year, and actually experienced losses in some measures in

comparison to national norms. The report said that more recent 2000 data shows modest improvement in results of children, but overall progress is still too limited. Children continue to lag behind national norms when they exit Head Start. They also lag behind more advantaged children throughout their school years."

And then it says, in conclusion, and this is, I believe, a fair man: "Democrats ought to be urging, not fighting, upgrades in Head Start's academic rigor. Instead, they are denouncing the measure sponsored by Representative MIKE CASTLE to give eight high-performing States leeway to improve the program."

And that is my judgment as well. Because today, and we are in 2003 not 1965, all these States have early education programs, prekindergarten programs and other programs that help with this. Others have looked at this. The Brookings Institute has looked at it; and they have reached the same conclusions, that we should be doing this.

So I think we need to be very cautious about what we are saying about what is in this program. I believe this affords kids an opportunity. Vote for the rule, support the legislation. It will be interesting to continue the debate through the evening.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

(Ms. PELOSI asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to say that H.R. 2210 will dismantle Head Start and rob single moms of the best early childhood education for their children.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), who should be able to vote on whether or not there are vouchers in her city.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I wanted to put on the record what I learned at a Congressional Black Caucus hearing. The rap is put on these children that they are not as far ahead as they should be. I asked why they were not exposed to reading, and the testimony was there had been, until recently, a Federal mandate against exposing these children to the kind of early access to reading that other kids get in nursery schools. The problem is with the Feds and not with the program.

□ 1730

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SWEENEY). The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 1½ minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Delaware

knows that I have great respect for him. That will continue regardless of our different views on this subject.

What he did was read from today's Roll Call by that paragon of education, Morton Kondracke, who is probably a friend of his and certainly a friend of mine. But the gentleman left out another thing that Mr. Kondracke said. He said, "Democrats did help Bush pass his No Child Left Behind standards and testing initiative in 2001 and now have every right to blast his and the GOP Congress' failure to fund it."

So, you see, context has a lot to do with things. When the gentleman was before the Committee on Rules, I asked him, in a respectful manner, was there one teacher organization or one parent organization or one student organization that supported the bill that he put forward. He looked to his staff and indicated that there was an education trust group, which the Democrats support as well because it deals with the quality of teachers and teacher pay. There are no teacher organizations, no parent organizations, no student organizations that support this proposition.

The fact of the matter is, one of my distinguished colleagues from Florida came down here and all of these ladies who represent nearly 13 million people, along with the two men that stood with them and asked unanimous consent, he referred to them as a line of mediocrity. If he wants mediocrity, all he has to do is suggest that if this bill rose to the level of mediocrity, it would be fine. Look to Florida for mediocrity when they say they leave no children behind. In Florida we not only leave them behind, we lose them and cannot find them.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It is time to demand the best for our children. The gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) are offering us that opportunity this evening. I urge my colleagues to pass this fair rule and agree to the underlying legislation. It is time to improve our children's chances.

Mr. DAVIS of California. I rise to object to the rule on consideration of H.R. 2210, the Head Start reauthorization. Once again, thoughtful amendments that address core issues were not ruled in order by the committee.

As has been so widely discussed this week, I believe it is important that this legislative body be able to give the proper consideration to this reauthorization—which is so critical to the most vulnerable among us, low income children.

I valued the opportunity to participate in considering this measure at the subcommittee and the committee levels. In that process, I was able to offer significant amendments for consideration and in one case for adoption by the committee. Happily, the reauthorization now before us recognizes the central nature of the social and emotional development of young children as well as their cognitive and physical development.

Nonetheless, other core issues were not adopted during the committee consideration. However, only 10 percent of the members of this body had the opportunity to consider those issues. The public deserves a full consideration by other 90 percent of their representatives.

I would particularly point to these major areas of concern: (1) providing financial support and loan forgiveness for the increased educational levels which will be required of teachers and staff members; (2) requiring performance standards of curriculum, developmentally appropriate accountability processes, personnel education, and professional development opportunities to be at least as high as federally required standards; and (3) assuring that any state-operated programs would be required to provide the comprehensive health and family services that are integral to Head Start.

Mr. Speaker and members, 100 percent of the members of this representative body have the right and obligation to consider how these issues should be resolved in order to enable the most vulnerable children to enter kindergarten closer to the levels of preparation enjoyed by more economically advantaged children.

Mr. PRICE of Ohio. 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. HASTINGS of Florida. 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 34 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1807

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SWEENEY) at 6 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2427, PHARMACEUTICAL MARKET ACCESS ACT OF 2003

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 335 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 335

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 2427) to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to promulgate regulations for the reimportation of prescription drugs, and for other purposes. The bill shall be considered as read for amendment. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate on the bill equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce or their designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. During consideration of H.R. 2427 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to a time designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) is recognized for 1 hour.

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

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before us is a well-reasoned rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2427, the Pharmaceutical Market Access Act of 2003. This rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill and provides 1 hour of debate, evenly divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce or their designees.

The rule also provides that during consideration of the bill, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to a time designated by the Speaker.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this rule provides for one motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the rule for H.R. 2427, the Pharmaceutical Market Access Act of 2003. The fact that this legislation is on the floor today demonstrates the willingness of the House Republican leadership to deal with contentious issues publicly on this House floor and to allow democracy to work by giving every Member an opportunity to cast their vote on an important issue and issues that are important to them and the American public.

But, while I believe that the underlying legislation that we will bring to the floor later is well-intentioned, it is also deeply flawed and puts the health and well-being of the American public at great risk. Congress needs to find a way to provide affordable prescription drugs to all Americans. This, however, is not the way to do it.

Mr. Speaker, the problems with this legislation can be divided into three main categories. First, safety; second, fairness; and, lastly, legal liability.

On the topic of safety, H.R. 2427 is certain to harm Americans in a number of ways. First is the issue of