

This amendment would simply give health care providers of Federal employees the option of providing a full range of reproductive health services, including abortion. This restriction is another attempt by anti-choice forces on the other side of the aisle to make abortion less accessible to women. Not only does it discriminate against women in public service, but it endangers their health. It is wrong and unfair, and that notice took us backward. We need to correct it with this amendment and take women forward once again.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the ranking member of the committee.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Chairman, this has been called an amendment on choice or life. I have argued this amendment repeatedly and have lost. This amendment is, I think, about whose money is it.

Now, I have propounded this argument before, and it has been rejected by the majority of this House. The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) said, and numerous other speakers have said about our money, that it is the taxpayers' money, the Federal Government's money. Now, a Federal employee is in a unique position in that 100 percent of their compensation package, salary, health benefits and retirement, are paid by the taxpayer. If one adopts the premise of the opponents of this amendment, then the Federal employee ought to be in the position of being told how to spend 100 percent of their money. That is the logical conclusion one must draw from the arguments being made today.

The Federal employee goes to work and is told we are going to pay X number of dollars, we are going to get health benefits and there is going to be a retirement system. That is their compensation package.

We take the position, apparently, that with respect to part of it, we are going to tell them how to spend it. We do not tell any other employees in the Nation how they can spend their package. We do not do it. So all of this is turned into a device to the same argument that deeply divides our Nation.

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Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, we take this debate and convert it into a debate over an issue that deeply divides this Nation and is an excruciatingly difficult issue. That is unfortunate, because in my opinion, this ought not to be a difficult issue. Because it is about whether or not Federal employees are equal to all other employees in terms of spending their money. It is not the taxpayers' money; they earned it, and the taxpayer converted it to the Federal employee in return for the services they perform for the Federal Government. It is the Federal employees' money.

Now, yes, part of that compensation is, we pay 72 percent of the benefits, but they choose the policy, and they have a wide variety of policies, because we have an excellent program as part of their compensation package.

So, Mr. Chairman, I ask my colleagues to try to look at what the substance of this does. I tell my friend, and good friend from New Jersey, the issue that he argues passionately about I respect him for. It is not, however, the issue raised by this amendment, I would suggest to him.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Chairman, I yield the remainder of the time to the distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE).

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, very briefly, I think my position on this matter of choice is fairly well known. I have long supported a woman's right to choose. I find myself in a somewhat different position today here, as the chairman of the subcommittee.

What we have attempted to do as a subcommittee is to cut through this Gordian's knot by taking the position that this House has spoken about fairly clearly in the last couple of years. On the one hand, we do have the prohibition, which the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) seeks to strike, that prevents health benefits for Federal employees from including any kind of abortion service. On the other hand, we do also have the provision in there which was debated and fought over this last year which allows for contraceptive services to be offered for those who have Federal employment health benefits.

While this is a difficult position and one that I may not completely support myself, I do believe the position of the committee and the position of the House is in this legislation and should be supported. For that reason, I oppose the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentleman from Arizona has expired.

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 560, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) will be postponed.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PEASE) having assumed the chair, Mr. DREIER, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4871) making appropriations for the Treasury Department, the United States Postal Service, the Executive Office of the President, and certain

Independent Agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

MODIFICATION TO ORDER OF THE HOUSE OF TODAY LIMITING AMENDMENTS DURING FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4871, TREASURY AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATION ACT, 2001

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, to correct apparently an error in propounding my earlier unanimous consent request, I now ask unanimous consent that during further consideration of H.R. 4871 in the Committee of the Whole, pursuant to House Resolution 560 and the order of the House of earlier today, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS) be permitted to offer an amendment regarding Federal contracts in lieu of an amendment regarding Federal election contracts.

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

There was no objection.

TREASURY AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 560 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 4871.

□ 1804

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4871) making appropriations for the Treasury Department, the United States Postal Service, the Executive Office of the President, and certain Independent Agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes, with Mr. DREIER in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment by the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) had been postponed and title V was open for amendment at any point.

Pursuant to the order of the House today, the previous order of the House