

consensus. We found that making the right decisions is not necessarily a difficult process. All you need to do is throw strikes.

Satchel Paige, when he was advising a young pitcher who was having a problem with his control trying to hit the corners simply looked at him and said, "Just throw strikes. Home plate don't move."

This rule is strikes, because home plate don't move. Will it change Washington and the way we do business? Yes. And appropriately so.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida, a former member and missed member of the Rules Committee, Ms. CASTOR.

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Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding time.

As a former member of the Rules Committee, I felt compelled to come to the floor of the House now because the Republican rules package is asking us to vote on a huge deception of the American people. Over the last year, we have had a robust debate about deficits and debt in this country, and yet the first significant vote the Republicans are asking us to vote on will add to burgeoning deficits and debt.

Here is a good example: No matter how you feel about the health reform law, the nonpartisan CBO says that that health reform law will cut the deficit by \$143 billion over the next few years. What the Republican rules package says is, when they bring up repeal of health reform next week, they are not going to count that money; they are going to add that again to the debt. So the first significant vote they are asking us to take on the floor is one that will set us on a course to adding \$143 billion to the deficit and debt.

I urge everyone to oppose the rules package.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I am happy to yield 45 seconds to the distinguished new chair of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA).

Mr. MICA. I would like to rise to engage Chairman DREIER in a brief colloquy regarding the highway funding point of order that is included in this rules package as clause 3 of rule XXI.

It is my understanding that this point of order makes no change in the manner in which highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, and transit programs are currently funded, which is through contract authority derived from the highway trust fund and provided in authorization acts. Rather, the new point of order provides that Members will have the ability under House rules to offer amendments to reduce funding for such programs, if they choose to do so.

In the interest of clarity and mutual understanding, I want to be assured that my understanding of this proposed

rect.

Mr. DREIER. If the gentleman would yield, I would say, Madam Speaker, the gentleman from Florida is absolutely correct. Clause 3 of rule XXI, as amended, does not change the way in which the underlying programs are funded, which is through contract authority provided by authorization acts.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL), the ranking member of the Committee on Transportation.

Mr. RAHALL. I thank the distinguished gentlelady for yielding the time.

While I regret I did not hear all of the previous colloquy, I do want to express my strong reservation and opposition to these rule changes because of the effects it would have on transportation-related issues.

The Republican rules package eliminates the current rules' direct tie between revenues to the highway trust fund, paid by the users through gas taxes at the pump, and the level of investment for these programs.

Currently, House rules provide that appropriators must fund highway and transit programs at levels set forth in surface transportation authorizations. This provision was championed by a Republican, our former colleague Bud Shuster, and was put into place to prevent funds building up in the highway trust fund to be used to mask the true size of the Federal deficit. The provision was intended to stop the same old smoke-and-mirrors game of Federal spending.

As their very first act as the majority, I find it incredible that Republicans would want to pursue a job-killing proposal like this, one that not only threatens jobs, but which could lead to dramatic reductions in spending for very necessary and worthy highway projects throughout the Nation.

Americans understand and they support paying motor fuel taxes at the pump, so long as they are guaranteed that those funds will be spent on transportation. The Republican rules package smears that guarantee and will have a potentially devastating effect on the level of Federal investment in vital highway and transit programs.

After more than a decade of effort by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the House adopted the current rule in 1998. The principle was simple: Gas taxes collected to improve highway and transit systems must be used for that purpose. The previous rule restored trust to the trust fund, and it has served the House and our Nation well for the past 12 years.

Today, the House Republican majority breaks that trust. They are returning to the ways of old—no hearings, no public debates, no discussion with any Member on this side of the aisle on the effects of the proposed rule on transportation investment.

in arcane budget rules, so, therefore, many Members, especially new Members, are not aware of what they are voting on and its consequences.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this rules change, as do so many highway contractors and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the very distinguished chairman of our transition committee, my friend from Hood River, Oregon (Mr. WALDEN).

Mr. WALDEN. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the chairman of the Rules Committee.

I wanted to talk just briefly about the transition itself, and I want to thank members of both parties who participated in very meaningful ways in our transition. I think it was an unprecedented effort in terms of its size and inclusiveness. Four members of our team were incoming freshmen. We offered Democrats the opportunity to participate both formally and informally, an act of bipartisanship that has been missing, frankly, from prior organizations going back over both parties' tenure in leadership.

I asked Speaker PELOSI to designate two Democratic participants. We distributed surveys to every Member, chief of staff, and scheduler on both sides of the aisle to get as many ideas as possible to reform the people's House. Let us always remember that this is the people's House. It is their business. It is the taxpayers' money, and the public has the right to observe and participate in this process. The outcome is the rules package before us today. The transition team received more than 2,000 suggestions from the general public submitted through our Web site.

And what did we accomplish? Bills will now be posted online in a searchable format at least 3 days before receiving a vote on the House floor. No longer will bills be dropped in the middle of the night and voted on the next day. We require that all bills include a citation of constitutional authority so Congress respects the limits imposed on it by the founding document.

To begin to control the explosion in spending, we are clamping down on budgetary sleights of hand that hide spending beyond the first 10-year window of a bill; any legislation projected to increase the deficit by more than \$5 billion in any single 10-year window out to 50 years will be subject to a point of order; a new CutGo rule requiring any suspension bill that increases authorizations or creates new programs to make equal or greater cuts elsewhere; a legislative calendar to ensure Members will be back home listening to the people who sent us here at least a week every month; ending the practice of passing comprehensive or omnibus bills that package unrelated legislation together in an effort to avoid public scrutiny; and will require every committee to Webcast