



The Daily Whip

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2005

House Meets At...	Last Vote Predicted At...
10:00 a.m.: Legislative Business Unlimited "One Minutes"	6:00 p.m.

FLOOR SCHEDULE AND BILL SUMMARY

Suspensions (2 bills):

- 1) **S.Con.Res. 13** – Congratulating ASME on their 125th anniversary, celebrating the achievements of ASME members, and expressing the gratitude of the American people for ASME's contributions (*Sen. Sununu – Science*)
- 2) **H.R. 912** – To ensure the protection of beneficiaries of United States humanitarian assistance (*Rep. Delahunt – International Relations*)

H.R. 27 – Job Training Improvement Act of 2005 (*Rep. McKeon – Education & the Workforce*) (**Subject to a Rule**). This bill reauthorizes the Workforce Investment Act, which authorizes funds for employment, training, literacy, and vocational rehabilitation programs for adults and dislocated workers, as well as activities for low income youth. Unfortunately, this Republican proposal would repeal and block-grant dedicated funding for vulnerable workers, permit Governors to divert funds from adult education, disability and veteran's services, cut job opportunities for youth, create vouchers to replace guaranteed job-training and repeal critical Civil Rights protections. In the 108th Congress, the House passed nearly identical legislation (H.R. 1261) on a 220-204 vote --- **seven Democrats voted for it**. In addition, last year the House narrowly passed legislation (H.R. 444) to authorize a pilot program for job-training vouchers (Personal Reemployment Accounts, or PRAs) on a 213-203 vote --- **all Democrats opposed**. In the 109th Congress, PRA's are included in H.R. 27, which the House Education and Workforce Committee voted to report H.R. 27 (26-20 vote), with all Democrats opposed, on February 16th.

- **H.R. 27 repeals dedicated funding for vulnerable workers** by block-granting funding for Employment Services and services to adults and dislocated workers.
- **H.R. 27 allows Governors to divert funds from critical adult education, disability, and veterans' services** by permitting them to take funds from adult education, vocational rehabilitation, and veterans' services to use for infrastructure and administrative costs.
- **H.R. 27 undermines existing job-training programs by establishing an untested job-training voucher program.** The bill's so called "Personal Reemployment Accounts" (PRAs) could be as small as \$500 (but are capped at \$3000) with the actual amount of the voucher to be determined by state or local workforce boards. To fund the new voucher scheme, existing resources would have to be shifted from proven, successful job-training methods. In addition, workers will be left to seek services with inadequate resources and questionable providers rather than having comprehensive one-stop service centers to provide them with quality job-training and other reemployment services.
- **H.R. 27 undermines current Civil Rights protections by allowing faith based grantees to hire and fire employees because of their religion or religious views.** Under current law, faith-based organizations do participate in federal job-training programs and can not discriminate in employment for taxpayer funded jobs. This bill REMOVES this protection for

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employees and job applicants of faith-based organizations, for the first time allowing federal funds to be used to deny employment based on religion in federal job-training programs.

The Rules Committee has recommended a rule that provides one hour of general debate and provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. The rule also makes in order three amendments:

- **Tierney Amendment (10 minutes)**. This amendment would preserve current law and strike the provisions in the bill that limit the portion of a state's funds that may be used for in-school youth to 30% of its allotment.
- **Velazquez Amendment (10 minutes)**. This amendment allows unemployed workers to use their Personal Reemployment Account funds to cover the borrower guarantee costs of 7(a) loans.
- **Scott (VA)/Woolsey/Van Hollen/Frank/Edwards/Nadler (60 minutes)**. This amendment strikes the provisions in the bill that remove current civil rights protections for employees and job applicants of faith-based organizations. The removal of these protections would allow federal funds to be used to deny employment based on religion in federal job-training programs. **Democrats are urged to VOTE YES.**

Democrats are urged to VOTE NO on final passage of H.R. 27 – Job Training Improvement Act of 2005.

TOMORROW'S OUTLOOK

The GOP Leadership has announced the following schedule: on Thursday, the House will meet at 10:00 a.m. for legislative business. The House is expected to consider **H.R. 841 – To require States to hold special elections to fill vacancies in the House of Representatives not later than 45 days after the vacancy is announced by the Speaker of the House of Representatives in extraordinary circumstances (Rep. Sensenbrenner – House Administration) (Subject to a Rule).**

Daily Quote...

"I don't think there's enough political momentum to get it [Social Security privatization] done this year. It hasn't gone well over the last month. We're still no further along than we were on Election Day."

- Stephen Moore, a conservative activist and the president of the Free Enterprise Fund, in a *Knight-Ridder* wire service story