



The Daily Whip

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2004

House Meets At...	Last Vote Predicted At...
10:00 a.m.: Legislative Business Unlimited "One Minutes"	6:00-7:00 p.m.

FLOOR SCHEDULE AND BILL SUMMARY

The House will meet at 10:00 a.m. The House Floor will be cleared immediately to allow a security sweep of the House Chamber prior to the Spanish President's address. **The House will re-convene at 11:00 a.m. in a joint meeting with the Senate to receive His Excellency Jose María Aznar, President of the Government of Spain.**

H.R. 3030 - Improving the Community Services Block Grant Act of 2003 (Rep. Osborne - Education & the Workforce) (Subject to a Rule). This bill reauthorizes through FY09 the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), which is a federal block grant to states and local agencies for a variety of antipoverty activities. CSBG funds initiatives that fight the causes of poverty (unemployment, inadequate housing, poor nutrition, and lack of educational opportunity) and gives local entities flexibility to design innovative programs to help low-income individuals and families with services such as employment and training programs, micro-business development, family development, senior services, local community and economic development projects.

Unfortunately, H.R. 3030, fails to correct provisions in current law that permit religious organizations receiving funds under this Act to discriminate in employment based on religion. When the CSBG was last reauthorized in 1998, there was no free-standing House consideration of the bill. At that time, the House Education and Workforce Committee reported a bill that did not contain language permitting discrimination in employment practices based on religion, however, the employment discrimination provision was inserted into the bill during negotiations on the 1998 omnibus bill to which the CSBG reauthorization was attached.

The Rules Committee has recommended a modified open rule that provides one hour of general debate; provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment and shall be considered as read; makes in order only those amendments to the committee amendment that are pre-printed in the Congressional Record; and provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Amendments will be considered under the five-minute rule.

Amendments expected to be considered today include two important Democratic amendments:

- **Miller-Woolsey- Payne-Andrews-Van Hollen-Frank-Scott (VA) Substitute Amendment.** The Democratic substitute provides for continued participation by faith-based organizations in CSBG programs, but prohibits religious discrimination with federal funds. The Democratic substitute will retain the CSBG authorizing language in H.R. 3030, but strike the provisions what would permit employment discrimination with federal funds based on a person's religion. **Democrats are urged to VOTE YES.**

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- **Miller Amendment.** This amendment authorizes additional funds under CSBG to be used to pay for a 6 month extension of unemployment benefits. Benefits paid under CSBG will be modeled after the UI program that expired for workers exhausting regular unemployment benefits after the week of December 20, 2003 (an estimated 375,000 unemployed individuals are exhausting their regular unemployment benefits in January without qualifying for any further assistance-and are receiving neither a paycheck or unemployment benefits). **Democrats are urged to VOTE YES.**

TOMORROW'S OUTLOOK

The GOP Leadership has announced the following schedule: No votes are expected for the rest of the week.

****Conference Reports may be brought up at any time.***

****Motions to go to Conference should they become available.***

****Possible Motions to Instruct Conferees.***

Daily Quote...

"All of the administration's mendacity comes together in the latest Bush budget. According to the White House, the deficit, now \$521 billion, will be cut roughly in half over the next five years. But the administration achieves this feat by excluding future costs of occupying and rebuilding Iraq, by claiming large savings from waste and fraud as yet to be identified, and by proposing general program cuts so unpopular that Congress is sure to reject them."

- Robert Kuttner in today's *The Boston Globe*.