Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy for yielding me this time and permitting me to speak on this.

One would think that if our Republican colleagues were so concerned about renewable energy, they would not have bottled up the wind energy tax credit that has been allowed to expire, languishing, stopping projects in my district that the business community, the environmental community, and farmers, frankly, who would like to harvest a little wind, would have benefited from. The months go by. It ticks off. We could have had a clean, precise, up-or-down vote on extending the wind energy tax credit if we were serious about renewables. It would have passed by 400 votes on this floor if the gentleman and the Republicans were serious about it and not bollix it up with a whole range of other items. Instead, we are given a proposal that would compromise the development of renewable energy by narrowing the scope of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

It is true that we have a shell of NEPA under this proposal, but it is basically an up-or-down vote. They seek to compromise the amount of time that is used. It is part of this notion of dodging the fundamental issues, a failure to pass a comprehensive energy bill that would really help renewables; that would help energy conservation; that would provide a vigorous debate on the floor of this House on things that would be able to help move the country forward. Instead, we are given this proposal.

Let us talk about this proposal for a moment. Certainly, hydroelectric energy is a renewable resource. We have got 400 or more dams that were licensed in the 1950s that were never under the NEPA process. If this proposal that has been advocated for us today is approved, these 400 dams will move forward without ever having the benefit of the complete environmental review. It is not about just an up-or-down. Anybody who has worked in areas where there has been significant environmental controversy knows that having the full range of alternatives being discussed, being debated, being analyzed results in having stronger proposals.

I have listened in vain to hear all of the proposals that have been sidetracked because renewables have been bollixed up in some sort of protracted environmental analysis. We are still listening. Where is the list of the projects? I am not aware of any. But let me say that there is a precise analogy to what happens sometimes on projects that have been hung up when we look at some that are in the infrastructure arena and what happens when people ignore the requirements of the law, when people do not engage the public, when they do not do a good job of studying the environmental impacts. Then we find that people push back. Then we find that we have inadequate proposals. Then the local politics intervene, and the people insist that the project be halted so it can be done right.

I would respectfully suggest that enabling hydroprojects to be built in virtually any waterway in the United States without a full range of environmental analysis is not good public policy and will engender more negative reaction. To have 400 dams that were never involved with a full range to begin with go through relicensing under this proposal would be a mistake.

I would hope the time will come that we can have an honest debate on a range of proposals that the American public deserves.