AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT FOR

H.R. 4909

OFFERED BY MR. LAMBORN OF COLORADO

Page 567, insert after line 6 the following (and amend the table of contents accordingly):

SEC. 1256. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) In exercising its right of self-defense during the Six Day War in 1967, Israel seized from Syria the Golan Heights, a strategically important plateau overlooking northeastern Israel.

(2) Modern Syria, born in 1946, has descended into brutal civil war, with President Bashar al-Assad now controlling less than 25 percent of the country.

(3) Despite recent advances by Syrian government troops, the Islamic State and other Sunni Islamists continue to control much of the territory President Assad once governed.

(4) Since the beginning of the Syrian conflict in 2011, the violence has taken at least 250,000 lives to date.

(5) Between 1 million and 1.5 million people have been wounded.
(6) More than 5 million refugees have fled Syria to neighboring countries and to Europe.

(7) It is estimated that an additional 7 million people are internally displaced persons.

(8) According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, more than 13.5 million Syrians are in need of humanitarian assistance – they do not have access to adequate drinking water, are unable to meet their basic food needs, and more than 2 million children out of school.

(9) The warring parties have compounded the problem by refusing humanitarian agencies access to civilians in need.

(10) A functioning nation-state is far from being constructed out of the currently warring Alawite, Shia, Sunni, Kurd, and Druze factions.

(11) Until the Six Day War in 1967, Syria used a heavily fortified Golan as a platform to fire at Israeli villages below.

(12) Damascus also permitted the Palestinian Liberation Organization to use the Golan as a staging ground for terrorism.

(13) In the immediate aftermath of the Six Day War, Israel offered to negotiate the status of all the
territories it had seized—which included the West Bank from Jordan and the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt. Syria, along with Israel’s other Arab neighbors, roundly rejected the offer.

(14) Since 1992, four Israeli prime ministers—Yitzhak Rabin and Ehud Barak, Ehud Olmert, and Benjamin Netanyahu—have sought to achieve peace with Syria in exchange for withdrawing from parts or all of the Golan Heights. All initiatives have failed.

(15) Since being under Israeli control, the Golan has become a thriving site of agriculture, industry, and tourism.

(16) The Golan is home to approximately 20,000 Jewish Israelis, as well as 20,000 Druze, who speak Arabic and practice their own distinctive religion freely under Israeli control.

(17) The peace and security of Israel is in the United States’ national security interest.

(18) The region has been stable and the attacks against Israel have significantly decreased since Israel has controlled the Golan.

(19) The Golan Heights must not come under the control of Islamic State jihadists, Hezbollah or other terrorist groups.
(20) Israel has a legitimate territorial claim to the Golan Heights, and Israeli law has applied to the Golan for almost 35 years.

(21) Israel has exercised its authority in a manner that suits all the residents of the territory.

(22) International law favors stability, order, and peace.

(b) Sense of Congress.—It is the sense of Congress that it is in the United States’ national security interest for Israel to maintain control of the Golan Heights.