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109TH CONGRESS } HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES { REPORT
1st Session } { 109–37

CHARLES "PETE" CONRAD ASTRONOMY AWARDS ACT

APRIL 12, 2005.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. BOEHLERT, from the Committee on Science, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 1023]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Science, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 1023) to authorize the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to establish an awards program in honor of Charles "Pete" Conrad, astronaut and space scientist, for recognizing the discoveries made by amateur astronomers of asteroids with near-Earth orbit trajectories, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

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39–006

I. PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of the bill is to authorize the Administrator of the National Space and Aeronautics Administration (NASA) to establish an awards program to recognize the discoveries of near-Earth asteroids by amateur astronomers, named in honor of the astronaut and space scientist Charles "Pete" Conrad.

II. BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE LEGISLATION

Monitoring and tracking near Earth asteroids is important to the advancement of the field of astronomy. Such activities also are important for identifying the potential threats to the Earth that these objects pose. Recent press accounts of asteroids passing close to the Earth have raised public awareness of the possibility that these objects could one day hit the Earth with potentially catastrophic consequences.

Amateur astronomers play an important role in monitoring near-Earth asteroids. Professional astronomers consider this service to be crucial for predicting orbital paths of near-Earth asteroids and detecting objects that deviate from their predicted orbits. The bill is designed to encourage amateur astronomers who track and monitor near-Earth asteroids.

III. SUMMARY OF HEARINGS

The "Charles 'Pete' Conrad Astronomy Awards Act" first was introduced by Congressman Dana Rohrabacher in the 107th Congress as H.R. 5303. On October 3, 2002, the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics conducted a hearing entitled "The Threat of Near-Earth Asteroids," which examined the threat posed by near-Earth objects (NEOs) and discussed the need for H.R. 5303.

The following witnesses testified at the hearing: Dr. Edward Weiler, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Associate Administrator for Space Science; Dr. David Morrison, Senior Scientist, NASA Ames Research Center; Brigadier General Simon "Pete" Worden, U.S. Air Force; Dr. Brian Marsden, Director, Minor Planet Center, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory; and Dr. Joseph Burns, Irving Porter Church Professor of Engineering and Astronomy, Cornell University.

Dr. Ed Weiler testified on the progress of NASA's ground-based survey for NEOs, intended to identify 90 percent of Near-Earth asteroids larger than one kilometer in size by 2008. Dr. Weiler stated that there are estimated to be about 1,000 such asteroids, and that the six research groups currently funded by NASA to identify NEOs have together discovered over 600 objects and are ahead of the predicted schedule. Dr. Weiler believed it likely that the goal will be reached by 2008. Dr. Weiler said it was premature to decide whether to extend the survey goal to include objects smaller than one kilometer in size. Dr. Weiler stated that if such an extended survey effort were conducted from the ground, then NASA should not play a role because NASA is best suited to space-based missions. He stated that NASA's role is better suited for detailed study of particular asteroids and comets.

Dr. Morrison testified on the threat to the Earth of collisions with asteroids and comets. He stated that the greatest risk today is not from objects large enough to cause global extinctions (such

as those believed to have caused the extinction of the dinosaurs) but rather from objects large enough to disrupt the Earth's climate on a global scale by injecting large quantities of dust into the stratosphere. Objects of about one kilometer in size pose such a threat and thus are the target of the U.S. survey for NEOs. He stated that the next logical goal is to search for objects that are smaller but could still kill millions of people upon impact with the Earth. Even objects measuring only 200–300 meters in diameter should be tracked since these pose the greatest danger of causing tsunamis, he said. Dr. Morrison emphasized that the goal of the current survey is not to find objects on their final plunge toward Earth, but rather to identify objects in nearby orbits for future monitoring. Thus discovering an object that has already passed the Earth in its orbit is still considered a "success."

Brig. General Worden testified that the U.S. military is developing sensitive surveillance technologies that could serve both defense and civilian interests. Such "dual-use" technology could contribute greatly to the detection of NEOs and would augment the current efforts of U.S. military telescopes used by NASA in NEO projects.

Dr. Brian Marsden testified on the management of data reported daily to the Minor Planet Center of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory regarding the observations of asteroids and comets. Dr. Marsden testified that the Minor Planet Center collects reports from around the world of detections of NEOs and other asteroids and comets and publishes confirmed detections electronically in the Minor Planet Electronic Circular. NEOs, he said, comprise less that one percent of the observations of asteroids as a whole. Dr. Marsden stated that augmentation of the Minor Planet Center staff is essential if the number of asteroid discoveries continues to increase, as would be expected with an extension of the NEO survey goals to include objects of smaller sizes. Dr. Marsden testified that most follow-up tracking observations of NEOs are made by amateur astronomers who would be encouraged in their activities by an award such as that created by the bill. Dr. Marsden testified that attention should also be given to long-period comets, which could pose an even greater risk than asteroids because they are less predictable.

Dr. Joseph Burns testified on the recommendations regarding NEOs from the recent National Research Council report entitled "New Frontiers in the Solar System," resulting from the Solar System Exploration (SSE) Survey conducted with scientists nationwide. One of the primary recommendations from the report was that NASA and the National Science Foundation should contribute equally to the construction and operation of a Large-aperture Synoptic Survey Telescope (LSST), a 6.5-meter-effective-diameter, very wide field (~3 degree) telescope that would produce a digital map of the visible sky every week, at a total cost of $125 million. Dr. Burns stated that the LSST could locate 90 percent of all NEOs down to 300 meters in size, enable computations of their orbits, and permit assessment of their threat to Earth. Dr. Burns testified that NASA should continue to be involved in ground-based NEO surveys even if the survey goals were extended because of NASA's experience with ground-based telescopes and because NASA has al-

ways been charged with using ground-based telescopes that aid space-based missions.

IV. COMMITTEE ACTIONS

The "Charles 'Pete' Conrad Astronomy Awards Act" first was introduced by Congressman Dana Rohrabacher in the 107th Congress as H.R. 5303. On October 1, 2002, H.R. 5303 passed under suspension of the rules in the House of Representatives by voice vote.

On February 25, 2003, Congressman Rohrabacher introduced H.R. 912, the "Charles 'Pete' Conrad Astronomy Awards Act," a bill to award amateur astronomers for their outstanding contributions to tracking and discovering near-Earth asteroids.

On October 8, 2003, the Committee on Science Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics met to consider the bill. The bill was adopted by a voice vote and forwarded to the Full Committee on Science.

On February 4, 2004, the Committee on Science met to consider the bill. Mr. Rohrabacher offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute that clarified the bill's intent, changed the roles of NASA and the Smithsonian, reduced the number of award categories in the bill from three to two, made permanent residents eligible to receive the awards, and changed the authorization level to "such sums" from within "sums otherwise authorized to NASA." The amendment was adopted by a voice vote.

Mr. Gordon moved that the Committee favorably report the bill, H.R. 912, as amended, to the House with the recommendation that the bill as amended do pass, and that the staff be instructed to make technical and conforming changes to the bill as amended and prepare the legislative report and that the Chairman take all necessary steps to bring the bill before the House for consideration. With a quorum present, the motion was agreed to by a voice vote.

On March 3, 2004, the House of Representatives considered H.R. 912 under suspension of the rules. On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended, H.R. 912 passed by a vote of 404 to 1.

On March 1, 2005, Representative Rohrabacher introduced H.R. 1023, the "Charles 'Pete' Conrad Astronomy Awards Act" in the 109th Congress.

On March 17, 2005, the Committee on Science met to consider H.R. 1023. Mr. Gordon moved that the Committee favorably report the bill, H.R. 1023, as amended to the House with the recommendation that the bill do pass, and that the staff be instructed to make technical and conforming changes to the bill as amended and prepare the legislative report and that the Chairman take all necessary steps to bring the bill before the House for consideration. With a quorum present, the motion was agreed to by a voice vote.

V. SUMMARY OF MAJOR PROVISIONS OF THE BILL

The bill, as reported, directs the NASA Administrator to establish an awards program in honor of Charles "Pete" Conrad, astronaut and space scientist, to recognize the discoveries made by amateur astronomers of near Earth asteroids.

NASA is to make the awards based on the recommendations of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory's Minor Planet Center,

a nonprofit organization under the auspices of the International Astronomical Union, an association of professional astronomers.

The bill authorizes the NASA Administrator to give one award each year to the amateur astronomer or to the group of amateur astronomers who in the preceding year discovered the intrinsically brightest near-Earth asteroid among the near-Earth asteroids that were discovered during that preceding year by amateur astronomers or groups of amateur astronomers. The bill authorizes the Administrator to give another award to the amateur astronomer or group of amateur astronomers who made the greatest contribution during the preceding year to the Minor Planet Center's mission of cataloguing near-Earth asteroids. Recipients of monetary awards must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents. An award shall be in the amount of $3,000.

VI. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short Title

This bill is to be cited as the "Charles 'Pete' Conrad Astronomy Awards Act."

Section 2. Definitions

This section defines several terms used throughout the bill, including "amateur astronomer" and "near-Earth asteroid."

Section 3. Pete Conrad Astronomy Award Program

This section authorizes the NASA Administrator to establish the Charles "Pete" Conrad Astronomy Awards program (Program), make awards under the Program based on the recommendations of the Minor Planet Center, and make one award annually in each of two categories if eligible discoveries or contributions are made. The two award categories are as follows: (1) an award to the amateur astronomer or group of amateur astronomers who in the preceding calendar year discovered the intrinsically brightest near-Earth asteroid among the near-Earth asteroids that were discovered during that year by amateur astronomers or groups of amateur astronomers; and (2) the amateur astronomer or group of amateur astronomers who made the greatest contribution to the Minor Planet Center's mission of cataloguing near-Earth asteroids during the preceding year. Awards to recipients, limited to U.S. citizens or permanent residents, are in the amount of $3,000. The Administrator's decisions in making the awards are final. The bill authorizes to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the program.

VII. COMMITTEE VIEWS

The Committee understands that amateur astronomers are primarily responsible for providing follow-up observations of known asteroids, and that discoveries of near Earth asteroids by amateurs are rare due to the dominance of professional surveys. The Committee expects NASA to carry out the Program in such a manner as best to promote amateur astronomy and to encourage amateur astronomers to continue their outstanding efforts to identify and monitor near-Earth objects.

The Committee believes that the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory's Minor Planet Center is uniquely qualified to recommend award recipients. The Center is internationally recognized as a major clearinghouse for tracking near Earth orbits and for its extensive work with amateur astronomers. The Committee expects the NASA Administrator to make awards based on the recommendations of the Minor Planet Center.

The Act provides that each award is $3,000, regardless of whether it is presented to an individual or a group.

The Committee expects that if a group of astronomers selected for an award under this Act includes a foreign student (defined for the purposes of this paragraph as a non-immigrant student under title 8, United States Code, section 1101(a)(15)(F) or a student with a "J" exchange visa) in addition to citizens or permanent residents of the United States, then the Administrator shall have the discretion to provide the foreign student with a non-monetary token of appreciation. The foreign student is not eligible to receive any part of the monetary award.

The Committee expects that administrative costs will be minimal.

VIII. COST ESTIMATE

A cost estimate and comparison prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 has been timely submitted to the Committee on Science prior to the filing of this report and is included in Section X of this report pursuant to House rule XIII, clause 3(c)(3).

H.R. 1023 does not contain new budget authority, credit authority, or changes in revenues or tax expenditures. Assuming that the sums authorized under the bill are appropriated, H.R. 1023 does not authorize additional discretionary spending, as described in the Congressional Budget Office report on the bill, which is contained in Section X of this report.

IX. CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

MARCH 30, 2005.

Hon. SHERWOOD L. BOEHLERT,
Chairman, Committee on Science,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 1023, the Charles "Pete" Conrad Astronomy Awards Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Mike Waters.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS HOLTZ-EAKIN,
Director.

Enclosure.

H.R. 1023—Charles "Pete" Conrad Astronomy Awards Act

H.R. 1023 would establish two new annual awards for amateur astronomers: one for the individual or group that identifies the brightest near-Earth asteroid and the other for the individual or group that makes the greatest contribution to the catalog of such

asteroids maintained by the Minor Planet Center of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory. Each award would be $3,000. The program would be administered by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1023 would have no significant effect on the budget and would not affect direct spending or revenues. According to NASA, the cost of administering the two awards would be negligible.

H.R. 1023 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Mike Waters. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

X. COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104–4

H.R. 1023 contains no unfunded mandates.

XI. COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee on Science's oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

XII. STATEMENT ON GENERAL PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Pursuant to clause (3)(c) of House rule XIII, the goals of H.R. 1023 are to establish an awards program for amateur astronomers to promote astronomy and to assist national efforts to identify near-Earth objects that could pose a threat to the Earth.

XIII. CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact H.R. 1023.

XIV. FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE STATEMENT

H.R. 1023 does not establish or authorize the establishment of any advisory committee.

XV. CONGRESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

The Committee finds that H.R. 1023 does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act (Public Law 104–1).

XVI. STATEMENT ON PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL, OR TRIBAL LAW

This legislation is not intended to preempt any state, local, or tribal law.

XVII. CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

This legislation does not amend any existing Federal statute.

XVIII. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

On March 17, 2005, a quorum being present, the Committee on Science favorably reported H.R. 1023, the Charles "Pete" Conrad

Astronomy Awards Act, by a voice vote, and recommended its enactment.

XIX. PROCEEDINGS OF THE FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP ON H.R. 1023, CHARLES "PETE" CONRAD ASTRONOMY AWARDS ACT

THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2005

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:05 a.m., in Room 2318 of the Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Sherwood L. Boehlert [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Chairman BOEHLERT. The Science Committee will come to order.

Pursuant to notice, the Committee on Science meets to consider the following measures: H.R. 1023, *Charles "Pete" Conrad Astronomy Awards Act;* H.R. 1158, *To reauthorize the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988;* H.R. 28, *High-Performance Computing Revitalization Act of 2005;* H.R. 1215, the *Green Chemistry Research and Development Act of 2005,* and how appropriate that we entertain this on St. Patrick's Day; H.Con.Res. 96, *Recognizing the significance of African American women in the United States scientific community;* and H.R. 798, *Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2005.*

Before we proceed with the markup, however, the Committee must first dispense with some administrative business.

I recognize Mr. Gordon to offer a request regarding Democratic Subcommittee membership.

Mr. Gordon.

Mr. GORDON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

By direction of the Democratic caucus of the Science Committee, I ask unanimous consent to ratify the election of Representative Brad Miller of North Carolina to the Subcommittee on Research, thereby filling one of the existing Democratic vacancies.

Chairman BOEHLERT. Without objection, so ordered.

I ask unanimous consent for the authority to recess the Committee at any point during consideration of these matters, and without objection, it is so ordered.

That concludes the Committee's organizational business, and we will now proceed with the markup beginning with opening statements. And I shall begin with mine.

I want to welcome everyone here for our St. Patrick's Day markup. I hope that the markup will leave everyone seeing green, not because we are spending lots of money, but because we are environmentally-friendly and because others should be green with envy

over the ability of this committee to move sensible, bipartisan legislation.

The bills before us today deal with a wide variety of critical problems, including the need to improve our energy efficiency, the need to improve our technological competitiveness, the need to improve our environment, the need to protect our citizens from the impacts of drug abuse, the need to have a more diverse scientific workforce, and the need to increase interest in science among the general public.

All of these bills have broad support. Four of them passed the House last year: the Charles "Pete" Conrad Astronomy Awards, the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act, the High-Performance Computing Revitalization Act, and the Green Chemistry Research and Development Act. The Senate ran out of time to take up these bills. They were still pending without prejudice when the clock ran out, and we are optimistic about moving them through the entire process in this Congress.

The other two items before us should also move swiftly: the resolution recognizing African American women in science, and the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act, which we held a very productive hearing on earlier this month.

I want to move this markup along, so let me just close by thanking all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, who introduced and contributed to these important bills.

Mr. Gordon.

[The prepared statement of Chairman Boehlert follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN SHERWOOD BOEHLERT

I want to welcome everyone here for our St. Patrick's Day markup. I hope that the markup will leave everyone seeing green—not because we're spending lots of money, but because we're environmentally friendly and because others should be green with envy over the ability of this committee to move sensible, bipartisan legislation.

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All these bills have broad support. Four of them passed the House last year—the Pete Conrad Astronomy Awards, the Steel and Aluminum energy Conservation Act, the High Performance Computing Revitalization Act, and the Green Chemistry Research and Development Act. The Senate ran out of time to take these bills up—they were still pending without prejudice when the clock ran out—and we're optimistic about moving them through the entire process this Congress.

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I want to move this markup along, so let me just close by thanking all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who introduced and contributed to these important bills. Mr. Gordon.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Chairman, in keeping with the date, you seem to have brought your blarney with you, and I wish to compliment you for this—for the efforts to revisit our unfinished legislative agenda from the past Congress and for your willingness to explore some new legislative areas.

I am especially pleased that Mr. Calvert and my Methamphetamine Remediation Act is getting the rapid consideration it deserves. We thank you and over $\frac{1}{3}$ of our committee's membership for

signing on as co-sponsors. The methamphetamine epidemic is a scourge on rural America, affecting many of our Congressional Districts that must be addressed. And I will explain more about the importance of this bill later in the markup.

Our committee's legislative environment in high-performance computing goes back at least 20 years. The bipartisan High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 that today's bill amends was instrumental in getting the various departments of the Executive Branch working together to apply the power of supercomputers to our society's major challenges. And we have been working together on today's amendments to the High-Performance Computing Act for really two Congresses now. We on the Democratic side are very supportive of this important legislation.

We will consider another important resolution by Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, recognizing the significant contributions that African American women have made to science. Given our need to encourage young men and women of all races to enter into the science and technology fields, I compliment Congresswoman Johnson for her advocacy of this resolution.

And our former Committee colleague, Doug Walgren, introduced the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988 at that time when the steel industry in the United States was experiencing hard time and high energy costs and consumption. The program established under this act has led a steel industry technology roadmap and 10 cost-sharing projects that have permitted the industry to modernize and to better meet the new higher-weight products needed—or lighter-weight products needed by the auto industry and other industry customers. We on the Democratic side are supportive of the effort of Congresswoman Hart and our new Member, Congressman Lipinski, to reauthorize this important program.

The Green Chemist Research and Development Act is also an important act today, and it is an improved over last introduction. We are pleased it incorporates several Democratic amendments offered during the last consideration. However, the bill still does not do all we should be doing moving into—moving in the right direction for green chemistry practices, and I think we will see some amendments this morning that would improve that bill.

Therefore, I will yield the balance of my time and look forward to moving forward today.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gordon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE BART GORDON

I wish to compliment Mr. Boehlert for his efforts to revisit our unfinished legislative agenda from the past Congress and for his willingness to explore new legislative areas.

I am especially pleased that Mr. Calvert's and my *Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2005* is getting the rapid consideration it deserves. We thank you and over a third of our committee's membership for signing on as co-sponsors.

The methamphetamine epidemic is a scourge on rural America, affecting many of our Congressional districts, that must be addressed. I will explain more about the importance of this bill later in the markup.

Our committee's legislative involvement in high-performance computing goes back at least 20 years. The bipartisan *High-Performance Computing Act of 1991* that today's bill amends was instrumental in getting the various Departments of the Executive Branch working together to apply the power of supercomputers to our society's major challenges.

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The program established under this Act has led a steel industry technology roadmap and ten cost-shared projects that have permitted the industry to modernize and to better meet the new lighter weight products needed by the auto industry and other industry customers. We on the Democratic side are supportive of the efforts of Congresswoman Hart and our new Member, Congressman Lipinski to reauthorize this important program.

The *Green Chemistry Research and Development Act,* H.R. 1215, is improved over its last introduction.

We are pleased that it incorporates several Democratic amendments offered during its last consideration, including my amendment to establish a grant program to enable colleges and universities to update their curricula to include training in green chemistry. However, the bill still does not do all we should be doing to move green chemistry practices from the laboratory bench into everyday practice. Therefore, we will be offering several amendments today to further improve this legislation.

Chairman BOEHLERT. Thank you very much, Mr. Gordon.

Without objection, Members may place statements in the record at this point.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Costello follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE JERRY F. COSTELLO

Good morning. Today, the House Science Committee is considering six bills for markup. Most are non-controversial and receive wide bipartisan support.

First, I would like to thank Chairman Boehlert, Ranking Member Gordon, and Representative Calvert for introducing H.R. 798, the *Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2005.* As a proud co-sponsor of H.R. 798, I am pleased the legislation has moved quickly through the Science Committee and am hopeful it will come to the House Floor soon.

This legislation is urgently needed because methamphetamine abuse and addiction continues to grow throughout the United States. In my home State of Illinois, methamphetamine use has significantly increased in the last few years. Alarmingly, almost 10 percent of the meth labs seized by law enforcement officials in 2004 were in Illinois. Clearly, methamphetamine abuse is a very serious problem in my congressional district and I strongly support Ranking Member Gordon's bill because it establishes a federal research program that would develop voluntary standards to help states deal with the challenges associated with methamphetamine abuse. I worked closely with the State and local law enforcement officials in my district to secure funding in 2003 and 2004 for a grant program in Southern Illinois to train approximately 100 law enforcement officials across the region in dismantling and cleaning up meth labs. In addition, Drug Task Forces were formed in Southern Illinois to fight against the methamphetamine problem that has reached epidemic proportions. We cannot allow the methamphetamine problem to overwhelm law enforcement officials and it is critical we implement a strategy to help our communities respond.

Secondly, I would like to thank the Chairman for agreeing to markup H.R. 1158, a bill *To reauthorize the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1998.* As a Member of the Congressional Steel Caucus, I am pleased this committee is taking an active role to keep the steel industry competitive in today's global marketplace. Many are aware that the steel industry suffered a major crisis a few years back, which caused four steel companies in Illinois to file for bankruptcy, including Laclede Steel and the parent company for Granite City Steel, which are in my district. More than 5,000 steel workers have lost their jobs in Illinois alone. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1158 to reauthorize important funding measures to improve the health of the domestic steel industry.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Committee for all their hard work on these important issues and look forward to today's proceedings.

We will now consider H.R. 1023, Charles "Pete" Conrad Astronomy Awards Act. I yield my time for remarks to the bill's sponsor, Mr. Rohrabacher, to discuss his bill.

Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, thank you very much. And I am very happy that we are remembering St. Patrick's Day today. And I am—as many people know that I am a writer by profession and not a lawyer, and I have always really looked to the contributions of the Irish. And in terms of their contribution to the language, for example, I understand that the word "chaos" derives from an ancient Gaelic expression meaning "running out of beer." And I will leave that one with all of you for my contribution for today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am very pleased that we are considering this piece of legislation so early on, and it was sad that we didn't get it through in the Senate the last time around, but I think that if we work on it now, that the "Pete" Conrad bill will not only be passed through the House, but go on and be passed through the Senate, because it is a fine piece of legislation, even if I do say so myself. It—what we are basically trying to do here is encourage young people to get involved in astronomy, and actually getting involved in the sciences and through—and the idea of getting involved in space programs at an early age. And we are offering awards to amateurs, two $3,000 awards to amateurs, one who discovers the brightest near-Earth object, and number two, the amateur who makes the greatest contribution to the cataloging of near-Earth objects for each year. These awards will be granted by the Smithsonian Institute. And again, it is aimed at young people. And what a better way to get kids enthralled with the potential of space and the magnificence of the—what God has given us in the universe—than to offer awards to get them looking up into the skies?

It is named after "Pete" Conrad, who was a constituent of mine, the third man on the Moon, a great space entrepreneur and pioneer who died just a few years ago in a motorcycle accident, and that was a very tragic thing. So I would hope, and since we had bipartisan support all of the way on this the last time around, and I thank you for bringing this up so early in this term.

Chairman BOEHLERT. Thank you very much.

Mr. Gordon.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Chairman, let me just briefly say this is a good piece of legislation, and I want to compliment Dana Rohrabacher for his long-time advocacy in pushing this to the forefront. You have done a good job, Dana.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gordon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE BART GORDON

Mr. Chairman, I want to speak in support of Mr. Rohrabacher's bill.

It is a thoughtful measure that establishes an awards program to encourage efforts by amateur astronomers to detect and catalog near-Earth orbit asteroids.

There has been a long, bipartisan tradition in this committee of supporting efforts to better understand both the threats and opportunities posed by asteroids and comets that pass close to the Earth.

The substance of this bill was already approved by this committee in a previous Congress and is non-controversial.

I want to compliment my good friend Dana on his initiative in this area, and I urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 1023.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman BOEHLERT. Thank you very much.

I ask unanimous consent that the bill is considered as read and open to amendment at any point. Without objection, so ordered.

Are there any amendments? Hearing none, the vote is on the bill H.R. 1023, *Charles "Pete" Conrad Astronomy Awards Act.* All of those in favor say aye. All of those opposed, no. In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it.

I recognize Mr. Gordon to offer a motion.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee favorably report H.R. 1023 to the House with the recommendation that the bill be passed. Furthermore, I move the staff be instructed to prepare the legislative report and make necessary technical and conforming changes, that the Chairman take all necessary steps for bringing the bill before the House for consideration.

Chairman BOEHLERT. The question is on the motion to report the bill favorably. Those in favor of the motion will signify by saying aye. Opposed, no. The ayes have it, and the bill is favorably reported.

Without objection, the motion to reconsider is laid upon the table. I move that Members have two subsequent calendar days in which to submit supplemental Minority or additional views on the measure. I move pursuant to Clause 1 of Rule 22 of the Rules of the House of Representatives that the Committee authorizes the Chairman to offer such motions as may be necessary in the House to adopt and pass H.R. 1023, *Charles "Pete" Conrad Astronomy Awards Act.* Without objection, so ordered.

We don't have to come back after votes. This is it. We are going to take up the Green Chemistry bill, which is going to require a little more time right after the recess.

Thank you all very much for arriving. I want to thank you for participating.

This concludes our Committee markup.

[Whereupon, at 11:10 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

Appendix:

H.R. 1023, Section-by-Section Analysis

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109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1023

To authorize the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to establish an awards program in honor of Charles "Pete" Conrad, astronaut and space scientist, for recognizing the discoveries made by amateur astronomers of asteroids with near-Earth orbit trajectories.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 1, 2005

Mr. ROHRABACHER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science

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A BILL

To authorize the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to establish an awards program in honor of Charles "Pete" Conrad, astronaut and space scientist, for recognizing the discoveries made by amateur astronomers of asteroids with near-Earth orbit trajectories.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Charles 'Pete' Conrad Astronomy Awards Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

For the purposes of this Act—

(1) the term "Administrator" means the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

(2) the term "amateur astronomer" means an individual whose employer does not provide any funding, payment, or compensation to the individual for the observation of asteroids and other celestial bodies, and does not include any individual employed as a professional astronomer;

(3) the term "Minor Planet Center" means the Minor Planet Center of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory;

(4) the term "near-Earth asteroid" means an asteroid with a perihelion distance of less than 1.3 Astronomical Units from the Sun; and

(5) the term "Program" means the Charles "Pete" Conrad Astronomy Awards Program established under section 3.

SEC. 3. PETE CONRAD ASTRONOMY AWARD PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall establish the Charles "Pete" Conrad Astronomy Awards Program.

(b) AWARDS.—The Administrator shall make awards under the Program based on the recommendations of the Minor Planet Center.

(c) AWARD CATEGORIES.—The Administrator shall make one annual award, unless there are no eligible discoveries or contributions, for each of the following categories:

(1) The amateur astronomer or group of amateur astronomers who in the preceding calendar year discovered the intrinsically brightest near-Earth asteroid among the near-Earth asteroids that were discovered during that year by amateur astronomers or groups of amateur astronomers.

(2) The amateur astronomer or group of amateur astronomers who made the greatest contribution to the Minor Planet Center's mission of cataloguing near-Earth asteroids during the preceding year.

(d) AWARD AMOUNT.—An award under the Program shall be in the amount of $3,000.

(e) GUIDELINES.—(1) No individual who is not a citizen or permanent resident of the United States at the time of his discovery or contribution may receive an award under this Act.

(2) The decisions of the Administrator in making awards under this Act are final.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—From sums otherwise authorized to be appropriated, there are

authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

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SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF H.R. 1023,
CHARLES 'PETE' CONRAD ASTRONOMY AWARDS ACT

Summary

This bill authorizes the NASA Administrator to establish an awards program in honor of Charles 'Pete' Conrad, astronaut and space scientist, for recognizing the discoveries made by amateur astronomers of asteroids with near-Earth orbit trajectories. The bill authorizes to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the act from sums otherwise authorized to be appropriated.

Section 1. Short Title.

Section 2. Definitions.

Section 3. Pete Conrad Astronomy Award Program.

This section authorizes the NASA Administrator to establish the Charles 'Pete' Conrad Astronomy Awards program based on the recommendations of the Minor Planet Center of the Smithsonian Astro-physical Observatory.

The Act establishes awards for the following individuals: a) an amateur astronomer, or group of amateur astronomers who discovers the intrinsically brightest new asteroid having a near-Earth orbit in the previous calendar year; b) an amateur astronomer, or group of amateur astronomers who provide the greatest service to update the Minor Planet Center's catalogue of known near-Earth asteroids in the preceding year. The awards for both categories are limited to U.S. citizens.

The Act requires that applicants demonstrate that they are not funded to use professional telescopes or observations while participating in the program. Government and professional astronomers associated with surveys of NEOs, as well as their family members, are ineligible for the awards.

The Act authorizes to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the act from sums otherwise authorized to be appropriated.