

105TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 4729

To provide for protection of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and endangered species and other wildlife that inhabit or uses that refuge, and to ensure that scarce refuge land in and around the Minneapolis, Minnesota, metropolitan area is not subjected to physical or auditory impairment.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 7, 1998

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska (for himself, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. McINNIS, Mr. GIBBONS, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. POMBO, Mr. RADANOVICH, Mr. McKEON, Mr. BOB SCHAFER of Colorado, and Mr. HANSEN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

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## A BILL

To provide for protection of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and endangered species and other wildlife that inhabit or uses that refuge, and to ensure that scarce refuge land in and around the Minneapolis, Minnesota, metropolitan area is not subjected to physical or auditory impairment.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

### 3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Minnesota Valley Na-  
5 tional Wildlife Refuge Protection Act of 1998”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The Congress finds the following:

3 (1) On September 21, 1998, the United States  
4 Fish and Wildlife Service announced an agreement  
5 with the Metropolitan Airports Commission of the  
6 State of Minnesota, which is the public agency that  
7 operates the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Air-  
8 port. The agreement would allow construction of a  
9 new runway for that airport that would have severe  
10 impacts on the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife  
11 Refuge.

12 (2) The agreement purported to mitigate im-  
13 pacts of a major runway expansion that would allow  
14 jumbo jets to fly as low as 500 feet from the surface  
15 of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

16 (3) The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife  
17 Refuge, in serving as an urban-oriented refuge, is a  
18 sanctuary in the midst of the urban and industrial  
19 sprawl of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. Any  
20 agreement to allow scores of jumbo jets each day to  
21 fly any closer to the one place of sanctuary in that  
22 region violates the very concept of providing places  
23 of refuge for wildlife.

24 (4) A disparity exists in the treatment of activi-  
25 ties affecting various National Wildlife Refuges. Al-  
26 though low-altitude overflights would be allowed over

1 the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, ac-  
2 tivities that would have significantly fewer impacts  
3 have been prohibited on or near other National  
4 Wildlife Refuges located in rural areas. Even emer-  
5 gency medical services necessary to save human lives  
6 have not been allowed access to some National Wild-  
7 life Refuges.

8 **SEC. 3. MINNESOTA VALLEY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**  
9 **PROTECTION.**

10 (a) MORATORIUM ON IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREE-  
11 MENT.—The Secretary of the Interior and the United  
12 States Fish and Wildlife Service shall not implement any  
13 agreement that would allow for an expansion of the Min-  
14 neapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

15 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date  
16 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior  
17 shall report to the Congress regarding whether the activi-  
18 ties associated with expansion of the Minneapolis-St. Paul  
19 International Airport or additional overflights of Min-  
20 nesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge by air traffic using  
21 that airport may constitute a taking of an endangered spe-  
22 cies or threatened species prohibited by the Endangered  
23 Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

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